Boundary-Making as a Destigmatization Strategy:

The Case of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims in Canada

by

Ivana Previšić

A thesis submitted to the School of Anthropological and Sociological Studies

in conformity with the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Ottawa

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

November 2018

© Ivana Previsic, Ottawa, Canada, 2018

Abstract

This thesis studies the experiences of Albanian and Bosnian Muslim immigrants in Canada in the post-9/11 period. It draws upon a boundary-making framework and employs qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the destigmatization strategies of Balkan Muslims, as well the national and cultural repertoires that enable and facilitate their utilization. The study yields several important findings. The quantitative findings show that Albanian and Bosnian Muslim immigrants in general show lower levels of attachment to religion compared to other Muslim immigrants. Also, many members of these ethnic groups appear to have resorted to the strategy of distancing and/or disidentifying from Muslim identification and/or faith in favour of identifying as irreligious as a way of coping with rising Islamophobia in Canadian society. The qualitative findings show that the move towards distancing/disidentification is due to a dissonance between the cultural repertoires of the meaning(s) of "Muslim" in participants' homeland versus that of the host society. Discursively, the process of distancing/disidentification occurs mostly by drawing religious and, relatedly, moral and value boundaries from other, mostly non-European and racialized Muslims. Importantly, despite having been exposed to instances of Islamophobia, participants overwhelmingly reported that their communities have not been significantly affected by anti-Muslim sentiments. I argue that the Albanian and Bosnian Muslims' lack of religious signs, bolstered by their "whiteness" and society's general unfamiliarity with Muslims and the Balkans, have greatly contributed to the perceived lack of religion-based discrimination. This study thus demonstrates that Islamophobia is to a significant extent an issue of racism, and that, relatedly, "race" continues to be a weighty marker of differentiation in Canadian society, where skin colour and appearance function as a religious sign.

Keywords: Muslims, Canada, Albanians, Bosnians, Balkans, Islamophobia, racism, whiteness, multiculturalism, religion, identity, identification, boundaries, repertoires, external categorization.

Acknowledgments

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Philippe Couton for the continuous support during my PhD studies, for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis. I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor.

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank the rest of my thesis committee: Dr. Elke Winter, Dr. Abdoulaye Gueye, Dr. Srdjan Vucetic, and Dr. Djordje Stefanovic, for their insightful comments and encouragement, but also for the hard questions which incented me to widen my research from various perspectives.

I thank my fellow colleagues Adina Madularea, Marie-Michèle Sauvageau, Anke Patzelt, Marie-Hélène Eddie, Daniel Burnier, Mihai Basarah Sarbu, Daoud Nour Ahmed, Maxine Cléroux, and Pascale Demontigny-Gauthier for their support and stimulating discussions.

I am grateful to my friends Blanka Miletic and Anna Ebel-Lam for their love and encouragement.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my family. I am grateful to my husband Ameer for his support, and my children Leo and Kai for being the inspiration for everything I do in life.

The completion of this thesis would have been impossible without the support of my parents, Vinka and Antun, and my brother Mihajlo. They made immense sacrifices in support of my academic endeavors. This thesis is dedicated to them.

Table of Contents

Abstract ... ii
Acknowledgments ... iv
Table of Contents ... v
List of Tables ... ix
Chapter 1 ... 1
Introduction ... 1
Theoretical Premise of the Study ... 3
Thesis Outline ... 5
Chapter 2 ... 8
Background: Histories, Narratives, Mythologies ... 8
Site One: Canada ... 8
Multiculturalism ... 8
Canada’s Race Relations ... 10
Canada’s Religious Landscapes ... 12
Islamophobia in Canada ... 13
Site Two: Muslims in the Balkans ... 19
Bosnian Muslims ... 20
Albanian Muslims ... 23
Albanians in Kosovo ... 26
Albanians in Macedonia ... 27
Europe, Balkans, Muslims ... 28
Conclusion ... 31
Chapter 3 ... 33
Theoretical Foundations and Conceptual Framework ... 33
Emotions and Interests: Weber on Social Action ... 33
Weber on the Formation of Ethnic Groups ... 36
Barth on the Formation of Ethnic Groups ... 41
Goffman: Presentation of Self and Stigma ... 44
“Identities” and “Groups” or Groups and Identities? ... 50
Internal vs. External Boundaries, Identifications, and Categories ... 54
Boundary-Making: Recent Frameworks ... 61
Boundaries: Definitional Challenges ... 62
Boundary-Making and Strategizing: Agency vs. Structure ... 63

Typologies of Boundary-Making Strategies 68
Boundary-Making and Stigma 69
Boundary Work in Practice 73
Conclusion 80
Chapter 4 81
Methodology 81
Criteria for Participant Selection 82
Process of Recruitment 84
Profile of Participants 87
The Interview Process 88
Validity 90
Relationship with Participants and Reflexivity 91
Data Analysis 93
Chapter 5 95
Balkan Muslims in Canada: A Demographic Profile 95
Muslims in Canada 95
Balkan Immigrants in Canada 99
Religion of Canadians from the Balkans 109
Bosnian and Albanian Muslims in 2001 and 2011 111
Religiosity and Canadian Identity of Canadian Muslims 124
Religiosity of Canadian Muslims 124
Canadian Identity of Canadian Muslims 128
Conclusion 133
Chapter 6 136
Who are “We”? Internal Ethnic and Religious Identifications and Boundaries 136
Group Ethno-Religious Identifications over Time and across Space 137
Experiences of Religion during Communism 137
Religion after Communism: Curiosity versus Imposed Categories 143
Intra-Ethnic Religious Boundaries 146
Intra-Group Gendered Religious Boundaries 150
Intra-Ethnic Regional Boundaries among Albanians 156
Intra-Ethnic Religious Differences among Albanians 159
Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Boundaries: Bosnian Muslims 161
Who Are We Now? 162

Who Am I? 164
Individual Ethnic Identifications 164
Individual Religious Identifications 168
“Mixed” Muslims 172
Religious Beliefs and Practices 174
Albanians and Religious Fluidity 181
Conclusion 182
Chapter 7 186
How Do “Others” See “Us”? Religious and Racial External Categorizations 186
Identifying as Muslim in Public 186
External Categorizations: “Appearance” as a Religious Identifier 194
Interactions with Other Muslims 198
Being an Atheist in Canada 202
Being Albanian and Bosnian Muslim in Post-9/11 Canada 205
Being Albanian and Bosnian in Canada 205
Are There Muslims in Europe? 206
Being Muslim in Canada 208
Ontario vs. Quебec 211
Experiences of Travel 212
Personal Experiences and Responses to Islamophobia 214
The Stigma of Being Immigrant 216
Experiences of Other Muslims Post 9/11 218
Being Muslim in Canada and Elsewhere 222
Views of Multiculturalism 227
Talking about Terrorism 230
Albanianism against Prejudice 235
Conclusion 236
Chapter 8 Civilizational and “Racial” Boundaries: Being “White,” European Muslims in Canada 238
Being European in Canada 239
On “European” Privilege 241
The Question of “Race” 243
Who/What Is “White”? 246
Accounting for the Surprise 248
On White Privilege 252

On Being a White Muslim ... 255
Conclusion ... 257
Chapter 9 “External” Boundaries: Relevant “Others” in Canada ... 261
Who Are “Canadians”? ... 262
Canadians: Differences and Similarities ... 265
Religious Differences ... 271
Who Are “Other” Muslims? ... 272
Similarities with Other Muslims ... 273
Differences from Other Muslims ... 276
Gendered Religious Boundaries: Hijabs and Niqabs ... 282
Opinions about the Practice ... 283
Social Networks and Ethno-Cultural Preferences ... 289
Conclusion ... 293
Chapter 10 ... 296
Conclusion ... 296
Disidentification from Religious Identification as the Principal Boundary-Making Strategy ... 296
Religion, “Race,” Gender and the Option to Have Options ... 301
Not All Muslims ... 304
A Case for Intuitively Strategic Boundaries ... 306
Imported Cultural Repertoires ... 307
Limitations and Recommendations ... 310
Bibliography ... 314
Appendix A Interview Guide ... 345

List of Tables

Table 1: Regions of birth of Canadian Muslims 96

Table 2: Canadian Muslims by visible minority status 98

Table 3: Visible minority status of Muslims born in Canada 98

Table 4: Visible minority status of Muslims born in Europe, outside the Balkans 98

Table 5: Visible minority status of Muslims born in the Balkans 98

Table 6: Visible minority status of Muslims born outside Canada and Europe 98

Table 7: Countries of birth of immigrants from the Balkans 100

Table 8: Period of immigration by country of birth 102

Table 9: Permanent residents by country of birth 103

Table 10: Frequency of Canadian residents of Balkan ethnic origins 105

Table 11: Region of birth of Canadian residents by Balkan ethnic origins 106

Table 12: Canadian citizenship of immigrants born in the Balkans 108

Table 13: Religious denomination of immigrants born in the Balkans 110

Table 14: Countries of birth of Muslims born in the Balkans 110

Table 15: Religious denomination of immigrants born in the Balkans 113

Table 16: Period of immigration by religious denomination of immigrants born in Bosnia and Herzegovina 114

Table 17: First ethnic origin of immigrants born in Bosnia and Herzegovina 115

Table 18: Religious denomination of Canadian residents of Bosnian ethnic origin....... 116

Table 19: Religious denominations of immigrants born in Albania.............................. 116

Table 20: Period of immigration by religious denomination of immigrants born in Albania.. 117

Table 21: Religious denomination of Canadian residents of Albanian ethnic origin..... 118

Table 22: First ethnic origin of immigrants born in Kosovo 119

Table 23: Religion of Canadian residents of Kosovar ethnic origin.............................. 120

Table 24: A comparison of the 2011 NHS with the most recent population censuses in Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia.. 123

Table 25: Importance of religious or spiritual beliefs to Canadian Muslims 124

Table 26: Importance of religious or spiritual beliefs of Canadian Muslim immigrants, by region of birth 125

Table 27: Religious participation of Canadian Muslims 126

Table 28: Religious participation of Canadian Muslim Immigrants, by region of birth 127

Table 29: Religious participation of Canadian Muslims, on one's own........................ 127

Table 30: Religious participation of Canadian Muslim immigrants, on one's own, by region of birth 128

Table 31: Pride in being Canadian among Muslims.. 129

Table 32: Pride in being Canadian among Muslim immigrants, by region of birth....... 129

Table 33: Pride in Canada's democracy among Muslims 130

Table 34: Pride in Canadian democracy among Muslim immigrants, by region of birth 131

Table 35: Importance of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms among Muslims 131

Table 36: Importance of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms among Muslim immigrants, by region of birth 132

Chapter 1

Introduction

Canadian society provides a unique context for studying the experiences of Muslims. On the one hand, Canada is the first officially multicultural country in the world. The country enjoys an international reputation as a haven for immigrants and minorities of all ethnicities, races, and religions. It is a bastion of diversity and tolerance. Most recently, Brexit, the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States, and the rise of right-wing parties in Europe—events that are all to some degree linked to the question of Muslims in the West—have re-energized the representations of Canada as an oasis for minorities. On the other hand, despite increased cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity, Canada remains a predominantly "white," European-origin society. And, despite the proliferation of religious denominations, including a rise in the percentage of those who do not identify with any faith, Canada is a Christian-majority country. The dominance of "whiteness" is not only numerical: research shows that "visible minorities"—most of them immigrants—experience racism and discrimination in various socio-economic domains. Muslims in particular have been subject to discrimination and stigmatization in the form of verbal and physical assault, hate crime, stereotyping, negative media portrayals, and antagonistic political discourse. The term "Islamophobia" is often employed to recapitulate the expressions of anti-Muslim sentiment.

Most studies of Muslim responses to Islamophobia in the post-9/11 period focus on the experiences of Muslims as a "group" without taking into account ethnic nuances or religiosity variances. These studies also centre on the experiences of non-European Muslims who followed specific historical and religious trajectories. This thesis differs from these studies by investigating the experiences of "white," post-communist, European-origin Muslims: Albanian

and Bosnian Muslim immigrants in Canada. It examines how these communities have responded to the post-9/11 stigmatization of Muslims.

Existing research on Bosnian and Kosovar immigrants mainly analyzes their experiences as refugees, while studies of immigrants from Albania tend to focus on their integration and settlement patterns. While many of these studies incorporate ethnicity in their analysis, and some do religion as well, they largely background or disregard the question of "race," and do not make it the focal point of the research. While this study likewise employs ethnicity as an important conceptual and analytical tool, it does so in dialogue with the questions of religious identities and identifications, and racial positioning(S), and views these concepts as equally important elements of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims' social lives, particularly in immigration contexts. This thesis thus examines the experiences of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims *as* Muslims, and "white" people, not only as refugees or immigrants.

These communities both come from societies that underwent a 500-year Ottoman rule (during which time the Muslim population in the Balkans swelled), as well as 50-year communist dictatorships that repressed, or entirely proscribed, all public expression of religion. Despite the region being commonly represented as "insufficiently" European in Western political and media discourses, geographically the Balkans clearly lie in Europe. More importantly, the region's inhabitants and its immigrants in the West see themselves as undeniably European. And, despite their cultural "whiteness" being constructed as dubious, especially in diasporic settings, countries that collect information on "race" officially classify (South)Eastern Europeans as "white." Balkan immigrants also see themselves this way, and in Canada, over 99% of them, irrespective of their religious background, identify as "white."

To this array of questions (European enough? White enough?), we can add the issue of religious identification (Muslim enough?). For many Bosnian Muslims, “Muslim” does not necessarily represent a religious category, but an ethnic and national one. For Albanians—a multifaith, ethno-national group—religion is subordinate to ethnicity and nationality. In fact, the narrative of religion being irrelevant to Albanians is part and parcel of Albanian national identity. Chapter 2 reviews in more detail these and other relevant Canadian and Balkan historical contexts and the related national narratives and cultural mythologies.

Theoretical Premise of the Study

The premise of this research is that social actors evaluate and define themselves, their relationships, and their actions in relation to others. A boundary-making framework is the most suitable approach to examining relational identities, identifications, and categorizations. Simply put, boundary-making is the drawing of symbolic lines between “me/us” and “others.” It is a process of—often rhetorically—elevating oneself or one’s group to an equal or superior level relative to another individual or group in order to access material or ideal resources. Countering social stigmatization often takes the form of boundary work. While social actors are certainly “free” to choose whichever strategies they desire, the effectiveness (measured by the degree to which the strategy resonates with dominant social groups) of boundary-making efforts depends on contextual and structural conditions. Scholars of boundary work disagree over what underpins the process, emotions or interests, as well as over the degree of agency social actors have in the process. In other words: Why do people do what they do, and how much control do they have over their actions?

Insights into these questions are found in the writings of Max Weber, Frederick Barth, and Erving Goffman. Some of their key concepts provide the theoretical foundations of this

study. More specifically, I reconceptualize and translate Max Weber's (1978) concept of social closure and his theorizations of the provenance of ethnic groups into the language of the boundary-making framework. Weber classifies social relations and social action as emotion- and interest-driven. Social closure (essentially, boundary work) occurs when there is interest in undertaking it. Outcomes of social closure include social stratification, power differentials, and, inevitably, social inequalities. Similarly, ethnic groups are formed on the basis of a political interest employing a *belief* in (*social construction*, in today's parlance) the similarities and differences of a "group." Weber thus treats cultural contents as pretexts, rather than causes of, ethnic communalization. The end game is material or symbolic prizes, the latter including honour and prestige. Barth (1969) agrees with Weber that "cultural stuff" is not the basis of an ethnic group; rather, the boundaries from others, initiated by strategic interests, lead to the formation of ethnic groups. However, despite the boundary being requisite for ethnic group initiation, what an ethnic group ultimately *is*, for Barth, is determined by how the members see and define it: the power to self-identify is internal and lies with the social actors themselves. Goffman's (1959; 1963) writings provide insight into the dynamics of everyday impression and stigma management, self-identifications and boundary-making, particularly in the context of unequal power relations involving social actors from minority, marginalized, or stigmatized groups.

As noted earlier, scholars of boundary-making disagree over to the motivation of social actors' boundary-making behaviour. On the one hand, Andreas Wimmer and Rogers Brubaker, following Weber, Barth, and Goffman, emphasize interest-based strategizing and the constraining effects of "social structure." On the other side of the argument, Michelle Lamont and Richard Jenkins caution against disregarding the role of emotions, and emphasize social

actors' agency as more significant than social structure. Chapter 3 examines these questions and tensions in more detail.

Based on these conceptual tools, this study seeks to identify 1) the boundary-making strategies employed by Albanian and Bosnian Muslim immigrants in Canada, 2) the relevant "groups" that the communities under investigation have positioned and defined themselves in relation to, and 3) the national and cultural repertoires they have employed in constructing their strategies and boundaries.

The main finding of this study is that participants employed disidentification and distancing from their religious origins in order to differentiate Albanians and Bosnians Muslims from other Muslims, and thereby blur boundaries with "mainstream" Canadians. The effectiveness of this response to Islamophobia produced important insights about how religion is racialized in Canada, and, more broadly, about the significance of "race" in the everyday lives of Canadians. This study also found that participants employed (and combined) both dominant Canadian cultural repertoires, as well as repertoires "imported" from their home societies in order to make sense of their position(s) in the Canadian society.

Thesis Outline

This study employs a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. The quantitative portion uses Canadian population censuses and government surveys, while the original data derive from semi-structured in-depth interviews. Details regarding the study design, including the strategies of participant recruitment and data collection, are found in Chapter 4.

I provide findings of the quantitative analysis in Chapter 5. The initial purpose of using population censuses was to obtain basic demographic information regarding the communities under investigation. The comparison of the 2001 and 2011 censuses, however, revealed an

unexpected finding: a significant decrease in the percentage of Balkan immigrants who identified as Muslim. This seems to contradict the general trend of numerical and percental increase that Muslims in Canada have been gravitating towards. Also, preliminary evidence from the semi-structured interviews prompted me to turn to the 2013 Canadian General Social Survey (GSS) on Social Identity to investigate the religiosity and importance of Canadian identity of Canadian Muslims.

Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 present the findings of the qualitative portion of the thesis. Chapter 6 looks inward, exploring the pre-migration experiences, beliefs, practices, and ethno-religious identifications of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims. It provides insight into the experiences of ethnicity and religion during and after communism. It examines participants' understandings of who *they*—as individuals and communities—are in the ethno-religious sense, and their perceptions of how they and their communities have changed over the course of time and across space. Chapters 7, 8, and 9 look outward, situating participants' experiences within the context of being Muslim in Canada in the second decade of the 21st century. Chapter 7 examines participants' interactions with Muslim and non-Muslim Canadians outside their ethno-religious groups. It explores their strategies of self-identifications, feelings, and responses to instances of Islamophobia. It examines how participants evaluate their experience of being Muslim to other Muslim-majority ethnic groups in Canada. Chapter 7 will show that participants' "appearance" coupled with the absence of religious signs—along with the general population's lack of knowledge about Muslims in general and the Balkans in particular—have shielded them from the effects of Islamophobia. Chapter 8 explores in more detail the racial component of participants' experiences as Muslims in Canada. Chapter 9 examines their identities, identifications, and

categorizations in relation to the relevant social groups: mainstream “Canadians” and Muslims outside their ethno-religious groups.

Chapter 2

Background: Histories, Narratives, Mythologies

This thesis is a study of Balkan Muslim immigrants in Canada in the post-9/11 era. Each study descriptor—Balkan, Muslim, immigrant, Canada, 9/11—is tied to specific geo-political and cultural, as well as local, national, and transnational, environments. In order to contextualize the thesis, this chapter outlines the relevant historical background(s) and ideologies, national myths and narratives, and cultural scripts. These "cultural repertoires" (Lamont, 1992) vary (and make different, often disparate sense) from context to context and represent structural conditions that can hinder or facilitate the way that social actors navigate their various cultural landscapes.

Site One: Canada

Multiculturalism

Canada is a multicultural country in both a normative and factual sense. Canada's official multiculturalism began when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau declared the framework in 1971. This was in part a result of non-French and non-British origin ethnic groups (25% of Canada's population at the time) demanding more recognition of their ethnic heritage, and in part an attempt to curb Québec nationalism (Ley, 2007). Today, more than one in five Canadians (21.9%) were born outside Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016b), and the country is home to more than 250 ethnic groups (Griffith, 2013).

Canadian multiculturalism has been criticized by academics, politicians, and ethnic minorities themselves. On the one hand, critics who accept the premise that Canada truly represents a multicultural country in which distinct ethnic cultures flourish have argued that the framework is divisive, marginalizing, and essentializing. Multiculturalism has been charged with promoting diversity at the expense of national unity, and with ghettoizing minorities and

fossilizing difference (Fleras & Elliott, 2002; Wong & Guo, 2015). Albeit a non-academic work, Neil Bissoondath's 1994 *Selling Illusions: The cult of multiculturalism in Canada* which sharply criticized the official multiculturalism policy as promoting divisiveness rather than unity remains one of the most influential books on the topic (Ryan, 2010). On the other side of the argument are those who suggest that multiculturalism is a "hoax," a symbol that controls rather than empowers minorities and that does little to find solutions for social equality (Ibid; also Cui, 2015; Hansen, 2014).

Also relevant to this thesis is the argument, brought forth most notably by Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002), that Canada's multiculturalism is intimately bound with the neoliberal doctrine. Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002, p. 173) argue that Canadian "diversity" and the resultant multiculturalism policies are built on selecting those immigrants who possess the characteristics of an ideal neoliberal citizen: "These class-advantaged people embody the very spirit of neo-liberalism—they are independent, self-reliant, active, and entrepreneurial"; and, importantly, they are tied to their culture only so far as it does not impede their being economically competitive.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to include the diversity of opinions incited by Canadian multiculturalism, both nationally and worldwide. Regardless of the debates around its purpose, meaning and effects, it is without doubt that Canadian multiculturalism represents a powerful national narrative and cultural repertoire that, as this thesis will show, structures the boundary-making and destigmatization strategies of Canada's minority groups. The narrative of Canadian multiculturalism has been a key tool for differentiating Canada from other Western cultures, particularly the United States. Popular discourses often contrast the metaphor of a Canadian "mosaic" to the American "melting pot," with the former representing a society that is

more tolerant towards ethnic, racial, and religious minorities (and even free of racism and discrimination towards ethno-racial minorities) relative to the latter. Liberal democratic discourses, both domestically and abroad, regularly construct Canada as a tolerant, multicultural state, lending Canadians "a degree of innocence" compared to more "overtly intolerant" states (Baldwin, Camero, & Kobayashi, 2011, p. 8). A 2015 Environics survey showed that multiculturalism is a key factor in Canadians' overall sense of pride. In the same survey, 54% of respondents identified multiculturalism as a Canadian symbol.

Canada's Race Relations

Undermining the representations of multicultural and tolerant Canada is the numerical and cultural hegemony of "whiteness": Canada is a predominantly European-origin society in which, according to the latest Canadian census (2016), almost 80% of people identify as "white." Belief in white superiority structured Canada's immigration and citizenship policies towards racialized minorities and immigrants for centuries, and was once a defining characteristic of Canadian society (Dua, 1999). For instance, colonization was framed largely in terms of white people bringing civilization to the wilderness (Perigoe & Eid, 2014). Up until the 1960s, Canada was generally closed to immigration from non-European countries. Non-white people who did make their way into the country were either given poor land, for example, the black Loyalists in Nova Scotia in the 18th century (Galabuzi, 2006), or forced to pay a head tax, seen in the case of Chinese immigrants in the 19th century (Li, 2003). In 1908, Canada imposed the requirement of a continuous journey from a home country to Canada in order to prevent immigration from the Indian subcontinent (Ibid). The Second World War witnessed the internment and confiscation of the property of Japanese Canadians (Driedger & Halli, 2000). Chinese, East Indian, and Japanese Canadians were enfranchised between 1947 and 1948 (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002, p. 43), while

Aboriginal peoples gained the right to vote only in 1960. According to Knowles (2007), Northwestern Europeans continued to receive preferential treatment in the immediate post-Second World War period.

In 1962, Canada adopted a points system under which prospective immigrants were assessed on the basis of education, occupational demand and age, rather than on their national, ethnic or racial origin (Li, 2003). As a result, the numbers of immigrants from non-European countries has steadily increased over the decades. Changes in racial demographics, along with the demand of non-European origin populations for equality, particularly in the labour market, have also brought about modifications in how the new communities are designated. Since 1984, persons "other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour" have been defined by the state as "visible minorities" (Statistics Canada, 2015b). This category consists mainly of the following groups: Chinese, South Asian, Black, Arab, West Asian, Filipino, Southeast Asian, Latin American, Japanese, and Korean. In contrast, Statistics Canada does not provide a definition of a person that is "Caucasian in race" or "white in colour." In 2016, more than one-fifth, or 22.3%, of people identified as a member of a group belonging to the visible minority category (Statistics Canada, 2016b).

Some authors argue that, even after the 1960s policy changes, racial and ethnic discrimination continued to structure Canada's immigration policies and favour (North-Western European) "whiteness" through policies and practices such as unequal distribution of visa offices, uneven staff allocation, and the provision of negative or positive "discretion" in making decisions about an applicant's "adaptability" (Henry, 1995; Jakubowski, 1997; Mullings, Morgan, & Quelleng, 2016; Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010; Thobani, 2007). Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002) argue that the much-politicized family-class immigration in particular has been

subject to the dominant "cultural, social, and religious norms" (p. 53). Others argue that race and ethnicity continue to adversely affect visible minorities in areas such as the labour market, the justice system, education, urban landscapes, and media representations (Abu-Laban and Gabriel, 2002; Bauder, 2006; Fleras & Kunz, 2001; Jiwani, 2006; Juteau, 2000; Li, 2003; Teelucksingh, 2006). Canada's migration and race scholars have argued that systemic racism in Canada is fuelled by "whiteness" persisting as a hegemonic, cultural norm that gives "white" people significant social benefits—from interpersonal, institutional, and ideological to infrastructural (Fleras, 2014; also Baldwin et al, 2011; Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007).

Systemic racism and the hegemony of "whiteness" thus represent pivotal cultural repertoires that compete in the public, political and everyday discourses with the narrative of multicultural Canada as tolerant and free of racism and discrimination towards minorities. As this thesis will show, these repertoires also structure to a significant degree the responses of Albanian and Bosnian Muslim immigrants to Islamophobia in Canada.

Canada's Religious Landscapes

Canada's religious profile is as diverse and fragmented as ever. In 2011, 67% of Canadians reported affiliation with Christianity, down 10% from a decade earlier (Statistics Canada, 2016c). Islam is currently the fastest growing religious affiliation, with 3.2% reporting Muslim background, up from 1.9% in 2001. Also, there is a significant increase in the number of those who do not identify with any religion in particular: in 2011, almost a quarter of Canadians reported having no religious affiliation, up from 16% a decade earlier (Statistics Canada, 2016c). In terms of religious beliefs and practices, in the 2013 GSS on Social Identity, almost two-thirds of Canadians identified religious or spiritual beliefs as "very" or "somewhat important." At the same time, religious attendance, the most reliable measure of religiosity (Bibby, 2017) appears to

be in decline, as almost a half of Canadians reported not attending religious services, and 40% reported no religious participation on their own.

Unlike, for instance, France, where the narrative of secularism dominates France's political and media discourses, or in the United States, where it is the opposite (Lamont, 2009; Lamont & Thévenot, 2000), Canada has no dominant religious narrative. Scholars of religion disagree as to the future direction of Canadians in this regard. For instance, based on the 2015 Religion Survey, Bibby (2017) argues that religion may be making a comeback in Canada. On the other side of the argument, Thiessen and Dawson (2012) predict that Canadians' preferences will continue to be in the area of private spirituality rather than organized religion.

This fractured character of Canada's religious landscapes is notable when compared with the prevailing narrative of Canadian multiculturalism and tolerance, or the numerical and cultural hegemony of "whiteness." Within this uncertainty and fragmentation, however, there does exist a dominant and fairly stable cultural repertoire concerning Canada's fastest growing, and arguably most controversial, religious community—Muslims—specifically with regard to their values and "compatibility" with Canadian society.

Islamophobia in Canada

Muslims have inhabited North America in small numbers since the times of Columbus and the importation of slaves from Africa, 14–20% of which were Muslims (Eliade, 1987, p. 426, in Yousif, 2008, p.13). According to Abu-Laban (1983, p. 76, in Yousif, 2008, p. 13), "the earliest record of Muslim presence in Canada dates back to 1871." Most were traders from Syria and Lebanon (McDonough & Hoodfar, 2005, p. 136). The majority of Muslims, however, are Canada's most recent immigrants. The liberalization of immigration regimes, the end of colonization, as well as the political and economic unrest in many Muslim countries, have

resulted in an increased flow of Muslims towards the West in the decades following the end of the Second World War (Yousif, 2008). Today, as noted earlier, slightly over one million Canadians identify as Muslim (Statistics Canada, 2016b), and Islam is "the principal minority religion of the country" (Hamdani, 2002, p. 8, in Yousif, 2008, p. 109).

Islam has been seen as antithetical to Christianity, Europe, and the West since its emergence in the 7th century (Fernandez, 2009, p. 3; Said, 1979; Zolberg & Woon, 1999). However, this perceived rift has intensified in the last decades of the 20th century. The media coverage of the 1979 Iranian revolution, the 1991 Gulf War, the growth of Islamist movements, reactions to Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict have all constructed Muslims as a threat to the West (Freedman, 2006; Karim, 2002; McDonough & Hoodfar, 2005; Zolberg & Woon, 1999). The word "Islamophobia" was coined in 1997 in a document published in the UK that stated that "public antagonism toward Islam" had been increasing since the 1980s (McDonough & Hoodfar, 2005, p. 137; Taras, 2012, p. 418).

These fears have been amplified since 9/11, "leading to a massive securitisation of immigration controls and the introduction in many countries of anti-terrorist legislation" impacting Muslims and "Muslim-looking" individuals in particular (Freedman, 2006, p. 170). Canada's Liberal government responded by introducing Bill-36, or the Anti-Terrorism Act (Moghissi, 2009, p. 11). According to Razack (2008, p. 85), anti-terrorism measures on Canadian soil have included "surveillance, stigmatization, and the actual incarceration of men considered to be 'Muslim-looking or Arab-looking.'" Since 9/11, several Muslim men have been denied their legal rights in Canada, the most well-known case being that of Maher Arar. Based on accusations of having contacts in al-Qaeda, Arar, a Canadian citizen, was arrested in the United States in 2011, deported to Syria and tortured for a year (Perigoe & Eid, 2014). However,

following a costly investigation, Maher Arar was cleared of any links with terrorism in 2006, paid $10.5 million by the Canadian Government and received a formal apology from Prime Minister Stephen Harper in 2007.

Canada's Conservative government introduced several state policies whose aim ostensibly was to address radicalization, but which were widely interpreted as anchored in stereotypes about Muslims and as principally aiming to consolidate political support (Griffith, 2013). One such policy was the anti-forced-marriage bill, *Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices*, which, in the words of Hogarth and Fletcher (2018, p. 84), created "a false dichotomy between 'immigrant honour killings', which to date in Canada there have been 17, and, for example, the hundreds of Indigenous women who have been murdered and have gone missing at the hand of their intimate partners." Indeed, many (if not most) state policies interpreted as targeting Canadian Muslims assumed a distinctive gendered character. Veiled Muslim women in particular have been seen as the target of several other state policies, from municipal to federal. For instance, in January 2007 the town of Herouxville, Québec, garnered international attention when its immigrants' code of conduct banned the stoning of women and covering of faces (Gagnon & Jiwani, 2012). In 2013, Québec's governing, the Parti Québécois (PQ), introduced "Projet de loi 60," known as the "Québec Charter of Values," proposing to prevent state employees from wearing "conspicuous" religious symbols at work, and to prevent those whose faces were covered from providing or receiving public services (Shachar, 2015, p. 325). The "niqab bill" (Provost, 2015) died with the PQ's defeat and the election of a Liberal government in 2014. And yet, as recently as October 2017, the same Liberal government of the province of Québec passed Bill 62 on religious neutrality, banning those whose faces are covered from

giving or receiving government services (including healthcare, public transport, and education services).

While the question of the niqab has been more of a preoccupation for Québec's politicians than English Canada's, it played a prominent role in the politics of the federal Conservative government of Stephen Harper (2006-2014), which in late 2011 banned face coverings for people taking oath at citizenship ceremonies, a move widely interpreted as targeting niqab-wearing Muslim women (Previsic, 2017). After a series of legal challenges, in November 2015, the newly elected Liberal government withdrew the appeal launched by the previous government. In 2014, the Harper government had also legislated that dual citizens who had committed acts of terrorism lost their citizenship, a move that was widely understood as specifically targeting Muslim Canadian men (Winter & Previsic, 2017). In June 2017, the Trudeau government repealed the provision and stipulated that "dual citizens living in Canada who are convicted of these crimes will face the Canadian justice system, like other Canadian citizens who break the law" (Canada, 2017).

At the same time, Islamophobia has flourished in day-to-day interactions of Canadian Muslims with non-Muslims. In 2006, 31% of Canadian Muslims reported having at least one negative experience based on their race, ethnicity, or religion (Soroka & Roberton 2010, p. 39 in Perigoe & Eid, 2014, p. 9). Ten years later, 5% and 9% of Canadian Muslims reported that most or many Canadians are hostile toward their community, while 27% indicated "just some" and 49% indicated "very few" (Environics Institute, 2016). This marks a modest improvement since the previous survey was conducted in 2006, when 35% of Muslims stated that only "very few" Canadians are hostile towards them. In 2002, 30–45% of Canadians held negative attitudes towards Muslims (Helly, 2004). The situation remains similar 15 years later, as a 2017 Angus

Reid survey found that 46% of Canadians view Islam negatively, compared to 32% for Christianity. News portals often feature stories of Muslims, mainly women who wear head coverings, who face everyday Islamophobia (e.g. CBC, 2017), but also, occasionally, of non-Muslim Canadians standing up for Muslims (e.g. Nease, 2016).

Canadian Muslims have also been the targets of hate crimes. According to Helly (2004), the Canadian Islamic Congress reported an almost 16-fold increase in reports of attacks on Muslims, from 11 in the year before the 9/11 attacks, to 173 in the year after. In 2017, Statistics Canada reported that hate crimes against Muslims were up 60% in 2015 compared to the previous year (Leber, 2017).[1] The National Council of Canadian Muslims has interpreted the increase in anti-Muslim sentiment as due to two terrorist attacks in France, as well as the Conservative Party's 2015 election campaign, which focused on the question of the niqab in citizenship ceremonies (Harris, 2017). The most significant attack on Canadian Muslims to date took place in January 2017, when Alexandre Bissonnette killed six Muslim men in a mosque in Quebec City. While Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called the attack an act of terrorism, Bissonnette has not been officially charged with terrorism, but with six counts of first-degree murder.

Negative media portrayals of Muslim may have also encouraged anti-Muslim sentiments both in Western Europe (Hussain, 2000; Saeed, 2007) and Canada. Studies show that mainstream Canadian media have tended to portray minorities in a negative light (Fleras & Kunz, 2001).

---

[1] In the report, Statistics Canada notes that the person targeted by anti-Muslim hate crime may not necessarily *be* Muslim, but be *perceived* to be Muslim: "It is important to note that victims of hate crimes targeting specific populations are not necessarily members of those specific populations. For example, if someone is assaulted and there is anti-Muslim language, the hate crime will be considered anti-Muslim whether or not the victim is Muslim. The hate crime is classified by the perception of the accused (even if this perception is inaccurate), not by the victim's characteristics."

Muslims in particular have been represented as threats to liberal-democratic values and national security (Flatt, 2012; Jiwani, 2006; Karim, 1996; Kowalski, 2013). Furthermore, the media have predominantly depicted Muslim women, often in the context of debates about head and face coverings, as oppressed and/or dangerous "others" (Antonius, 2013; Bullock & Jaffri, 2001; Byng, 2010; Gagnon & Jiwani, 2012; Jiwani 2006). At the same time, some more recent studies show that Canadian media have made progress in terms of providing more balanced Muslim representations (e.g. Astana, 2014; Kazemipur, 2014; Winter & Previsic, 2017).

Hostility towards Islam seems to have gone hand in hand with racism against and stigmatization of Muslims in Canada and, more broadly, the West (Meer, 2012; Taras, 2012). The vast majority of Muslims live in Asia and Africa and are therefore of non-European origin. "Brown-skinned" (Chen, 2010) or "Middle-Eastern looking" (Marvasti & McKinney, 2004) people are often seen as, or suspected to be, Muslims, despite the racial heterogeneity of Muslims and the religious heterogeneity of people from Africa and Asia (Hamdon, 2010). Post-9/11 profiling has used "race as a proxy for risk, either in whole or in part" and it has been accepted that "brown skin, 'Middle Eastern looks,' beards, and Muslim or Arab names provided good reasons to detain" (Razack, 2008, p. 32). Jiwani (2006) also notes that racial profiling has disproportionately affected "men who appear to be Muslim or of Arabic heritage" (p. 196). Racial characteristics ("brownness") have thus come to be used as a tool for reading religious background (Islam). Antonius (2013) further argues that the media stigmatize Muslims who wear religious signs as "tacit supporters of violence," thereby presenting Islam as a "danger that is in the process of invading public space and threatening national identity" (p. 138).

Islamophobia, as a set of meanings about, and reactions to, Muslims that are rooted in stereotypes (Allen, 2010) thus presents another Canadian cultural repertoire that this thesis is

situated within. As Kazemipur (2014) has observed, most of the debates about Muslims in Canada have centred predominantly on theological questions concerning Islam, religious scriptures, and beliefs, rather than the social questions of relations, relationships, and attitudes.

To sum up, this chapter has situated the thesis in the context of the cultural repertoires of, first, Canada as predominantly multicultural and tolerant, but also European-origin and “white”; second, Canada’s society as predominantly Christian-origin, but also increasingly fragmented and ambivalent towards religion; and three, Canadian society as increasingly hostile to its Muslim citizens, but also as perceived as being less so compared to the United States and Western Europe.

Site Two: Muslims in the Balkans

In this section, I shift focus to the Balkans to consider the geo-political position of this area in Europe, and the history of Muslims in the Balkans. While Muslims were residing, albeit in very small numbers, in the Balkans in the 10th and 11th centuries, it was the Ottoman conquest in the 14th and 15th centuries that led to Islam’s expansion in the Balkans (Banac, 1994; Friedman, 1996; Merdjanova, 2013). Islam was spread partly by the influx of Turkic-speaking populations, and mainly by the gradual conversion of Slavs and Albanians (Merdjanova, 2013). Today, the majority of Balkan Muslims are Sunnis. They belong to various ethnic groups, mainly Albanians, Bosniaks, Turks, Pomaks, Torbesh, and Roma (Öktem, 2011). The largest Muslim community, of around 2,300,000, is in Albania, and the smallest, consisting mainly of about 70,000 Tatars and Turks, is in Romania. Linguistically, Balkan Muslims are divided into Albanian-speakers (4,355,000), Slavic-speakers (2,635,000), Turkish-speakers (1,040,000), and Roma (300,000) (Ibid). Öktem (2011) estimates that out of 60 million people living in the Balkans, about 9 million are Muslims.

In the following sections, I outline the ethno-religious characteristics of Bosnian and Albanian Muslims, paying particular attention to the question of Bosnian Muslim ethno-religious identity, as well as the intra-ethnic multifaith character of Albanians.

Bosnian Muslims

> I came to Istanbul and people asked me: "Who are you?" "Turčin" (Turk), I said, but they shook their heads: "Eh, you are not. You are Arnaut" (Albanian). So I came to Skadar as Arnautin, however, I was told that I was Bosniak. So, I went to Sarajevo as Bosniak and people around me asked where I was from. I answered: "Bosniak." They thought I was mad and I was told to be Crnogorac (Montenegrin), but with Islamic religion. Then, in Podgorica one guy told me that I was nothing more than Turčin (Turk). Well, one cannot understand this. Who am I and what am I? Nobody.
>
> – Zuvdija Hodžić, Gusinjska godina

Particularly significant for this thesis is the politics not only of identity, but also of identification (Chapter 3 will distinguish between the two). The questions of how we refer to ourselves (and others) *now*, how we *have* named ourselves and others throughout history, and who we have excluded or included (or how *we* have been excluded or included by others) are important power- and history-laden mechanisms of boundary work. This is particularly true for Bosnian Muslims, whose names and identification have undergone significant modifications over the course of the last hundred years or so.

While Bosnian Muslims officially adopted the ethnonym "Bosniak" in the 1990s, the name goes back to the Ottoman days, when it referred to all inhabitants of Bosnia, irrespective of their religion (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 35; Friedman, 1996, p. 43). During the Ottoman period, Bosnian Muslims called themselves both "Turci" and "Bosnjaci" (Bosniaks) (Banac, 1994, p. 133; Friedman, 1996, p. 43). When Bosnia fell under Austro-Hungary (1878-1908), the authorities adopted the name "Musliman" (Muslim) and officially recognized Serbs and Croats

as distinct ethnic groups (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 35). It was during the Habsburg and Yugoslav periods that Bosnian Muslims became increasingly secularized (Banac, 1994, p. 134).

In the first few decades following the end of the Second World War, the Yugoslav regime completely restructured ethnic, national, and religious identities, creating further identity (and identification) confusion. While Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, Slovenians, and Montenegrins had ethnonyms distinct from their religious affiliations, Slavic Muslims, mostly Bosnians, had the option to declare their nationality only as "Muslim" in 1948; "Yugoslav ethnically undetermined" in 1953; "Muslim in the ethnic sense" in 1961; and finally "Muslim in the national sense" in 1971 (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 36). In 1968, Yugoslavia officially recognized Bosnian Muslims as a nation (Friedman, 1996, p. 149; Merdjanova, 2013, p. 36).[2]

While Islam underwent a "renaissance" in the 1970s and 1980s Bosnia, the increased tolerance of public expression of religion, including state-authorized buildings of mosques, did not diminish Yugoslavia's and Bosnia's secular character (Banac, 1994, p. 145). The state mantra of "Brotherhood and unity" superseded religion, and the state continued to underscore national over religious identities: Muslim, as a nation, was written with a capital "M," whereas Muslim, as a religious identity, was written using a lower-case "m" (Bringa, 2002, p. 29; Merdjanova, 2013, p. 36). Only Muslims by ethnicity were able to access high social positions. As Bringa (2002) notes, in Yugoslavia—but not in Europe outside Yugoslavia—the ethnonym

---

[2] "The Muslim nation was established primarily as a means of countering Serbian and Croatian nationalist claims on Muslim Slavs, but also with a view of foreign policy interests regarding the Muslim countries in the Non-Aligned Movement" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 36). Note also that Albanian and Turkish Muslim minorities were excluded from all these categorizations. "Muslim" could only refer to Slavic Serbo-Croatian speaking Muslims, even if they were atheists. This further promoted "an understanding of Islam as a nationality or a nation" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 36). Banac (1994, p.146) notes that it was possible to be a Muslim by nationality and a Jehovah's witness by religion, a commonplace combination in the Bosnian town of Zavidovići.

Muslim "had become detached from its original meaning of someone who submits to the will of God and believes that Muhammad is his prophet" (p. 26). Bringa (2002, p. 29) writes that, similar to Christian-background societies of Western Europe, there was a spectrum of beliefs and practice among Bosnian Muslims: there were those who held deep religious convictions; those who practised key rituals and celebrated major religious holidays out of respect for tradition; those who believed in God but never practised Islam; and Muslims by "ethnicity," many of whom considered themselves atheists. Indeed, we will see later in the thesis that this diversity of practices and polysemy of meanings of "Muslims" represents a key cultural repertoire that will influence to a significant degree how Bosnian Muslims in Canada respond to Islamophobia.

Following the fall of communism in 1991, Bosnian Muslims themselves disagreed as to how to refer to themselves. On the one side were those who viewed the Bosniak ethnonym as an "alleged laicization of the national Muslim identity," while on the other side were those in favour of separating religious and ethnic appellations (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 37). In 1993, the Bosnian Muslim Assembly in Sarajevo decided to replace the ethnonym "Muslim" with "Bosniak" (Bošnjak). Bosnian Muslims were thus transformed into "a political and sovereign nation, closely linked to the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina" (Ibid). The ethnonym "Bosniak" was subsequently adopted by most of Slavic Muslims in Sandzak, a region on the border of Serbia and Montengro, Croatia, and Montenegro.

While the ethnonym Bosniak applies exclusively to Bosnian Muslims, the civic, geographic category Bosnian (Bosanac) applies to all inhabitants of Bosnia, irrespective of their religious and ethnic origins (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 37). However, in the English language, the ethnonym "Bosniak" is rare and "Bosnian" is most frequently used to refer to Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks), while the other two "constitutive" nations of Bosnia and Herzegovina are referred to

as "Bosnian Serbs" and "Bosnian Croats" in order to distinguish them mainly from Croats who live in Croatia, and Serbs who live in Serbia or Montenegro. For instance, the Canadian population census does not include "Bosniak" as an ethnic origin response, only "Bosnian," which in the Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian languages represents a civic, geographic citizenship, rather than an ethnic category.

Today, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious country consisting of Bosniaks (who are predominantly Muslims),[3] Serbs (mainly Orthodox Christian), and Croats (mostly Catholic).[4] Their citizenship is Bosnian, although most Bosnian Croats and Serbs also hold citizenships of Croatia and Serbia. While before the 1990s war, Bosnia's inhabitants of all ethnic and religious backgrounds referred to themselves as "Bosnians" (Vucetic, 2004), anecdotal evidence suggests that today Bosniaks are more likely than Bosnian Serbs and Croats[5] to refer to themselves as "Bosnians." While most Bosnian Muslims refer to themselves as Bosniaks (and more broadly Bosnian), Bosnian Serbs and Croats often refer to them as "Muslims," rather than Bosniaks, in order to delegitimize their unique ethnic identification.

Albanian Muslims

Albanians, you are killing kinfolk,
You're split in a hundred factions,
Some believe in God or Allah,
Say "I'm Turk," or "I am Latin,"
Say "I'm Greek," or "I am Slavic,"
But you're brothers, hapless people!

---

[3] In the 2001 and 2011 Canadian censuses, Bosnian ethnic origin was claimed mostly by those who identify as Muslim: 57% and 47% respectively. The question remains if these numbers would be different if "Bosniak" replaced "Bosnian" as the response category and if fewer non-Muslims would choose this response.

[4] There are other minority groups, such as Jews, Roma, Ukrainians and Italians.

[5] Most Bosnian Croats live in Herzegovina, not Bosnia. Unlike Bosanac (Bosnian), which has become more associated with Bosnian Muslims, Hercegovac (Herzegovinian) is not associated with any particular ethnic group or religion, although it carries somewhat negative connotations outside Herzegovina.

You have been duped by priests and hodjas[6]
To divide you, keep you wretched.
Who has the heart to let her perish,
Once a heroine, now so weakened!
Well-loved mother, dare we leave her
To fall under foreign boot heels ?...
Wake, Albanian, from your slumber,
Let us, brothers, swear in common
And not look to church or mosque,
The Albanian's faith is Albanianism [to be Albanian]!

Excerpt from "O moj Shqypni" by Pashko Vasa, 1878

Unlike the Bosnian Muslims, there is no ambiguity about the ethnicity of Albanians. Albanians of all religious denominations and backgrounds identify as ethnic Albanians. Furthermore, Islam did not play a central role in the nation-building process of Albanians in the Albanian nation-state (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 48). National identity was formed around language rather than religion. This tendency to prioritize ethno-national over religious identities is historically entrenched: Albanians have a long history of multi-confessionality, as well as a pragmatic attitude toward religion, as evidenced by frequent crossings of religious boundaries (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 40).

Albania gained independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1913. In the following decades, the state aggressively promoted secularism and "Albanianism"—a form of civic nationalism that foregrounds ethnicity and nationality and downplays religion—despite Albanians' Muslim majority (Endresen, 2012; Merdjanova, 2013). In the post–Second World War years, Albania's communist regime, arguably the harshest in the region, perceived Albania's multiple religious communities as a threat to the construction of "Albanianism" and national unity (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 39). Religion was banned in 1967 and Albania was

[6] Imams.

proclaimed the world's first atheist republic by the 1976 constitution. Officially, the communist authorities viewed Islam as backward and primitive and emphasized "the superficial character of the conversions to Islam and the persistence of crypto-Christianity under the Ottoman rule" (Ibid.; also Blumi, 2014). One result of the state's persecution of all religions, however, was increased solidarity between Albania's different religious groups (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 40).

Communism fell in 1990. Following decades of isolation, religion returned to the lives of Albanians in Albania. Mosques and religious schools were built with the spiritual and material support of Muslim countries and organizations. Albania's efforts to establish its presence on the international scene included increased cooperation with Muslim countries. Albania's contract for membership in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the opening of a national branch of the Islamic Development Bank, however, "sparked much public controversy and was never ratified by the Parliament" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 40). Muslim Albanians apparently "resented a potential perception of Albania as a Muslim country" (Ibid).

Today, the four major religious communities enjoy relaxed and "unique interreligious tolerance" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 40). However, religious tensions occasionally resurface, attesting to religious identities carrying certain social importance. For instance, in 2003, Merdjanova (2013) documented the perception of some Albanians that the Democratic Party, which gained its vote primarily from the Sunni Muslim and Catholic communities, is "pro-Muslim" and that the ruling Socialist Party, whose electorate came mainly from the Orthodox and Bekhtashi Muslim communities, is "pro-Orthodox" (p. 41). While this example illustrates the importance of religious identities in Albania, it also shows that inter-religious relations in Albania do not, as Western observers would expect, "run along a Muslim-Christian divide" (Ibid). Religion in Albania is thus both marginal, because of the country's high level of

secularization, and central, because religion persists "as a basis for communal identities" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 42; also Clayer, 2003).

"Albanianism" and the narrative of religious tolerance is part and parcel of Albanian national mythology (Endresen, 2012; Schwandner-Sievers & Fischer, 2002) and one of the most significant "imported" cultural repertoires identified in this study. Proclamations such as "religion can never divide Albanians" and "there have never been religious conflicts among Albanians" are commonly encountered in Albania's public sphere (Endresen, 2012). As Endresen (2012, p. 4) notes, "Religion matters to Albanians, but the idea that it does not is an important part of their identity."

Albanians in Kosovo

In contrast to Albanians from the Albanian nation-state, Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia– the vast majority of whom are Muslim–relied on their religious background to construct their national identities in opposition to Serbs in Kosovo and ethnic Macedonians, both Orthodox Christian Slavs (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 38). While Tito's Yugoslavia initially restricted the rights of Albanians in Kosovo, the 1967-1981 period was marked by recognition of their rights, which facilitated this minority group's political mobilization (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 43). The Albanian population's rapid increase during this period resulted in the rise of Albanian nationalism. Yugoslavia was decentralized in the 1980s, and in 1989 Serbia abolished Kosovo's status as an autonomous province. In 1990, Albanians in Kosovo established the Republic of Kosovo, which was recognized only by Albania. The tensions between Serbs and Albanians led to the war of 1998-1999. After the NATO-led bombing of Serbia, Kosovo became a de facto international protectorate. Kosovo declared its independence in 2008 (Ibid).

Today, Albanian Muslims constitute around 92% of the 2.1 million Kosovo population (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 43). Even though the conflicts with the communist state and Serbia's majority Orthodox Christian populations, as well as the 1990s war, "advanced the role of Islam as a marker of Albanian national identity," Islam has played a marginal part in the public sphere following the fall of communism (Ibid). In the 1990s, Kosovo Albanian political parties steered clear of mobilizing Islamic symbols or ideas. In fact, similar to Albania in the 1990s, Kosovo's politicians, including the late President Ibrahim Rugova, downplayed the role of Islam and promoted Christianity as a "hallmark of a European identity" (Clayer & Bougarel, 2017, p. 195). As a result, many Albanians began attending the Roman Catholic celebrations of Easter and Christmas (Merdjanova, 2013; also Blumi, 2014; Ramet, 2014). Today, despite Islam's occasional re-emergence in the public sphere, the political climate in Kosovo is "overwhelmingly secular" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 43).

Albanians in Macedonia

Albanian Muslims represent a quarter of Macedonia's two million strong population. Islam has played a more important role in the construction of national identity among Albanians in Macedonia compared to Albania, and even Kosovo (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 43). The blending of religious and national identities is mostly the result of their minority status among the Orthodox Slavic ethnic Macedonian majority, as well as "the lack of a strong atheistic Albanian elite (as opposed to the situation in Kosovo and Albania)" (Ibid). In order to prevent a spillover of nationalism from Kosovo and to suppress the national consciousness of Albanians in Macedonia, the Yugoslav state employed various strategies, including supporting and controlling Muslim institutions as a bulwark against Albanian nationalism. This strategy, however, failed, as the

mosques "became spaces where Albanian national identity was sheltered and fostered" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 46).

After communism fell and Macedonia became independent, Albanians in Kosovo were demoted from a "nationality" to a "national minority" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 46). In fact, the preamble to the 1991 constitution defined the country as "the national state of the Macedonian people." The protests and campaigns for recognition as a nation and involvement in decision-making led to tensions and the 2001 insurgency by the ethnic Albanian National Liberation Army in Macedonia. While the army avoided "Islamic identifications," it did demand that "Islam be given constitutional equality with Orthodox Christianity" (Ibid). The state conceded to the demands and the rights of Albanians in Macedonia were strengthened. Today, similar to Albanians in Kosovo, Albanian political parties in Macedonia have secular platforms that nonetheless seek to protect the religious right of Albanian Muslims in Macedonia (Ibid).

Europe, Balkans, Muslims

Geographically, the Balkan Peninsula comprises the following countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Greece, while Romania, Croatia, and Turkey, which is 3% in the Balkans, are partially located on the peninsula. The Balkans bear the marks of Byzantine, Ottoman, and communist legacies and are predominantly Orthodox Christian with the largest non-immigrant-origin Muslim population in Europe.

The region is often discursively framed as bellicose, backwards, and unreasonable. Tracing "Balkan" and "Balkanization" as pejorative terms, Todorova (1997/2009) has argued that the negative image of the region, which consolidated around the First World War, remained unchanged for most of the century and intensified after the fall of the Iron Curtain. The 1990s conflicts in former Yugoslavia solidified the image of the region as violent, uncivilized, and

therefore inherently non-European. Hammond (2005, p. 135) argues that between the end of the Cold War and 9/11, the Balkans were constructed as the region threatening to engulf the civilized and democratic West. Despite being geographically European, phenotypically "white," and largely Christian, the "Europeanness" of the Balkans is tainted by the region's Byzantine, Ottoman, communist, nationalist, Orthodox Christian, and Muslim legacies, all attributes representing the East—everything that "Europe" and the West are not. The fact that Greece, geographically a 100% Balkan country, is rarely identified as such–because of its legacy as the cradle of Western democracy and the fact it never endured communism–attests to the Balkans being a political, ideological, and cultural rather than a geographic entity.

The Balkans' Ottoman legacy and the presence of Islam in particular have been represented as a "threat" to the region's European image. For Balkan nationalists, "the continuous presence of . . . Muslims . . . among the Balkan Christians is a sign of the latter's shameful backwardness" (Longinović, 2002, p. 45; also Bringa, 2002). Underpinned by the history of Ottoman rule, the 1990s conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo, and the large presence of Albanian and Turkish minorities in Macedonia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Greece, the post-9/11 era has seen an intensification of anti-Islam sentiments and the appropriation of Western anti-Muslim rhetoric on the part of the region's non-Muslim political elites (e.g. Erjavec & Volčič, 2008; Petrović, 2008).

Balkan Muslims have not been spared the discourse linking Islam with extremism. While various Balkan governments and official representatives invoked the threat of "Islamic radicalism" even before 9/11, the post-9/11 period saw a proliferation of this discourse. As Merdjanova (2013, p. 70) and Öktem (2011) have noted, the portrayals of the Balkans as a hub for transnational Islamic terrorism were disseminated through publications such as *The Coming*

Balkan Caliphate: The Threat of Radical Islam to Europe and the West, *Islamic Terror and the Balkans*, *Unholy Terror: Bosnia, al-Qa'ida, and the Rise of Global Jihad*, and *Al-Qaida's Jihad in Europe: the Afghan-Bosnian Network*. The media have tended to depict the region as an easy access for al-Qaeda to Western targets and as part of the "Green Corridor" connecting Turkey with Muslims in Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Serbia, and Bulgaria. Balkan Muslims have often been portrayed in Western media as having fallen prey to Islamic militants from outside the region (Merdjanova, 2013). The presence of "Jihadi" fighters from the Arab world during the 1990s war in Bosnia; the active post-war presence of Saudi and Gulf religious organizations which funded the restoration of religious institutions; the pockets of strict Muslim communities (often referred to interchangeably as the "Wahabis" and the "Salafis" despite differences between the two), and the appearance of hijabs, hitherto nonexistent in the region, also fuelled claims of growing "Islamic" radicalism in the region (Öktem, 2011). Merdjanova (2013, p. 76) argues, however, that "radical Islam" in the Balkans lacks both "historical roots and a social base." In a similar vein, Öktem's (2011) research suggests that the security threat from these communities is minimal and largely contained. According to these authors, what plagues Balkan Muslims at large are weak democracies, corruption, and poverty, rather than potential for radicalization.

Furthermore, although Islam underwent a visible revival following the fall of communist regimes, for Balkan Muslims, the "diffusely defined and abstract global umma" failed to materialize and the attempts at a pan-Balkan Muslim organization were unsuccessful; as a result, "recourse to the umma as a form of political identity has been sporadic rather than systematic" (Merdjanova, 2013, p. 58). The vast majority of Balkan Muslims thus prioritize local ethno-

religious identities and identifications over membership in and associations with either the regional or global Muslim community.

Conclusion

This chapter situated the study in the context of Canadian and Balkan histories, and within their related narratives and mythologies. While Canada has always been ethnically diverse, the growth in the non-European, including Muslim-origin, population since the 1960s has meant that the host societies gradually became more diverse in terms of race and religion. On the one hand, the "visibility" and diversity of minority populations, coupled with their becoming increasingly vocal and successful in demands for equal treatment and inclusion, have resulted in widespread proclamations of a post-racial world. In Canada, the official multiculturalism policy has been celebrated as evidence of the country's liberal and tolerant nature and a symbol of its distinctiveness, particularly compared to its southern neighbour. On the other hand, ethnic, racial and religious diversity has incited a rise in hostility towards immigrants on the part of the predominantly Christian—but also increasingly religiously ambivalent—"white" European-origin host societies. In recent years, Muslims in particular have been seen as refusing to integrate and threatening the values and cohesion of Western states. While anti-Muslim sentiments were present before 9/11, the period following the attacks has seen an increase in "Islamophobia" and racialization of Muslims.

The increase in negative sentiments towards Muslims—together with Canada's profile as predominantly Christian, European-origin, and "white," but also multicultural, tolerant, and liberal—provide important contexts within which the experiences of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims in Canada need to be situated. While these communities come from ethno-religiously diverse home environments, religions in Albania, Kosovo and Bosnia were mostly tied to one, or

very few, ethnic groups. By contrast, Canada is not only ethno-religiously diverse, but contains a vast ethnic diversity within its religious denominations, including Islam. Like many other immigrants, Bosnian and Albanian Muslims have transitioned from racial homogeneity into racial heterogeneity. Also importantly, while Bosnian Muslims have historically occupied the position of ethno-religious minority, Albanian Muslims from Albania and Kosovo (but not Macedonia) have enjoyed the majority status in their respective states and provinces. What they all bring to Canada is a history of precarious identifications and national mythologies underpinned by Ottoman, communist, and post-socialist legacies.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Foundations and Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, I will outline the theories underpinning this thesis. I start with Max Weber, Frederick Barth, and Erving Goffman's contributions to the study of boundary-making, and "translate" their concepts into the language of a boundary-making framework. I then move on to more recent approaches, focusing in particular on the works of Andreas Wimmer, Michelle Lamont, Rogers Brubaker, Richard Jenkins, and Danielle Juteau. I will pay particular attention to the question of tensions between emotions and interest in the process of boundary-making, and the role of social structure in the process of boundary work.

Emotions and Interests: Weber on Social Action

Scholars of boundary work disagree regarding the primary "source" of social actors' boundary-making actions. Do people follow their interests or their emotions? Max Weber's theorizations of social relations, social action, and social closure shed light on this question. Weber (1978) classified social relations into communal and associative; the former are built not necessarily on common qualities or a situation, but on a "common feeling" of belonging that leads to a "mutual orientation to each other . . . rather than of each to the environment" (p. 42). Communal relations are more subjective, emotional, and based on feelings of belongingness. By contrast, associative relations are rational and built on common interests. Empirically, however, most relationships have both characteristics to some measure. The distinction between the two lies in the manner in which social actors perceive the social relationship.

Social relations are the basis of all social action, including boundary work. Social action is so central to Weber's sociology that he defined discipline as a "science concerning itself with the interpretive understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its course

and consequences" (Weber, 1978, p. 4). Social action is behaviour that is "meaningfully oriented towards . . . others," as opposed to "inanimate objects" (pp. 22, 23). The question of what guides social action—emotions or interests—is evident again in Weber's typology of social action. Weber (1978) distinguished between four types of social action: traditional, affectual, value rational, and instrumentally rational. Traditional behaviour is determined by "ingrained habituation" and tends to be automatic. Affectual behaviour is more conscious than the traditional, but likewise limited in terms of being meaningful. Value-rational action is conscious and guided by values, while instrumentally rational behaviour occurs when "the secondary results are all rationally taken into account and weighed." As is the case with social relationships, there are no pure empiric types (pp. 25-26).

Weber's concept of social closure can be understood as a process of boundary-drawing vis-à-vis relevant others. Weber (1978) argues that once a relationship is established, it can be open or closed to outsiders. Weber argues, however, that the process of closure tends to be for rational, rather than traditional or affectual reasons. If we conceptualize boundary work as opening or closing of relationship to various degrees, the process, for Weber, is strategic and driven by interests. Closure is not motivated by differences or commonalities (these can vary from minor to significant), but by "spiritual or material" interests:

> If the participants expect that the admission of others will lead to an improvement of their situation, an improvement in degree, in kind, in the security or the value of the satisfaction, their interests will be in keeping the relationship open. If, on the other band, their expectations are of improving their position by monopolistic tactics, their interest is in a closed relationship. (p. 43)

The primary motive for a relationship closure is not the perceived differences between groups, but "the maintenance of quality, which is often combined with the interest in prestige and the

consequent opportunities to enjoy honor, and even profit" (Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology, p. 46). In fact, the differences serve as mere pretexts:

> Usually one group of competitors takes some externally identifiable characteristic of another group of (actual or potential) competitors—race, language, religion, local or social origin, descent, residence, etc.—as a pretext for attempting their exclusion. It does not matter which characteristic is chosen in the individual case: whatever suggests itself most easily is seized upon. (p. 342)

Ultimately, monopolizing resources is a form of domination whose purpose is "always the closure of social and economic opportunities to outsiders" (p. 342). The degree of closure is gradual and varies depending on the actors' specific interests. These account for the various types of boundary-making strategies, something I will explore in more detail later in this chapter.

The process of social closure—understood in this study as a form of boundary-making—is the basis of social inequalities and the creation of social hierarchies (Lamont, 1992). In his work, Weber does not explicitly link social closure to his theory of stratification, despite the fact that exclusion is an essential part of the process of social closure (Levine, 2006, p. 126). Unequal distribution of power is central to the process of stratification, and in his discussion of "social order," Weber (1978) first defines power as "the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a social action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action" (p. 936). He then argues that power in society is distributed via three phenomena: classes, status groups, and parties (p. 927). Above all, Weber is concerned with the relationship between class and status, and the different basis on which they make claims to symbolic and material resources.

In agreement with Karl Marx, Weber (Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology, 1978, p. 927) bases class groups on property. In contrast to Marx, Weber argues for the existence of status groups, which are "determined by a specific, positive or negative, social

estimation of honor" (p. 932). Status groups are based on emotions and belongings, and thus represent a type of communal group (Parkin, 2002). Like classes, they can also claim stakes to various material and symbolic rewards (particularly honour and prestige). The question of dignity and honour is a central part of the boundary-making framework. Is prestige above other, material "prizes," as Lamont (2014) argues, or is it on par with other, more material, often class-related social rewards, as Wimmer (2013) suggests? For Weber, the two can be interlinked—status groups cut across class, seeing that honour can, although it does not have to be, tied to one's class position. Property is not always linked to status, although, as Weber argues, in the long run it tends to be.

To summarize, Weber posits that social actors perceive social relationship as being based on emotions and belongingness (communal), or rationality (associative). Social actors are motivated by a mix of traditional, affectual, or rational reasons. Whether a relationship is open or closed depends on social actors' interests in the pursuit of symbolic or material rewards. The process of closure leads to stratification and differential power distribution in a society. Classes (based on property) and status groups (based on honour) are key channels for the distribution of power. I will now apply these concepts to a discussion of ethnic group formation.

Weber on the Formation of Ethnic Groups

In this section, I explore Max Weber's theories of ethnic groups. While this thesis also examines religious and racial identities,[7] a review of theories of ethnic group formation is important because it sheds light on the subjective nature of group formation. Two points are of importance here: a constructivist argument and a relational one. The former is that people come together

[7] In fact, authors such as Wimmer (2008, 2013), Brubaker (1999; 2014), Jenkins (2008a; 2008b) collapse "race" under the umbrella of ethnicity.

based on both subjective beliefs and mutual interest. The latter (mutual interest) relates back to the argument that interest-based strategizing underlies the process of boundary-making. The relational aspect highlights that "groups" and "identities," including (ethnic) culture, emerge as a result of interaction (often contrast and comparison) with others, in other words by drawing boundaries. Related to this is the question of (self)identification, which will be discussed in more detail below: that is, Do our "identifications" emerge internally, externally, or both?

Max Weber is the only founding father of sociology who theorized the provenance and existence of ethnic groups. Weber (1978) defined ethnic groups as

> those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relation exists. (p. 389)

Crucial here is the subjective belief in the existence of a common ethnicity and the self-identification of group members as belonging to the group.

For Weber (1978), it does not suffice to share certain characteristics with others for an ethnic group to exist. Ethnicity is not a result of people with certain commonalities "naturally" coming and belonging together. On the contrary, (belief in) ethnicity is constructed under specific circumstances. Two conditions need to be fulfilled: the presence of others who are perceived as different within the context of political social action. The process of ethnic group constitution begins when any accessible differential trait becomes "subjectively perceived as a

common trait" in the presence of "racially different persons" (p. 385).[8] However, the presence of others is not sufficient for an ethnic group to be constructed. While language is often the basis for the emergence of ethnicity, in itself it merely represents a taken-for-granted means of communication. The awareness that the same language is spoken comes from an encounter with "third persons" that speak a different language (p. 43). The same language then becomes a shared situation and a basis for feelings of community. If members of the same "race" feel common experiences that are linked "to some antagonism against members of an obviously different group," the "difference" becomes "the basis of joint (mostly political) action" (p. 385). Without the subjective perception of "race" (or any other available differential) as a common trait, there is no group. Weber thus sees ethnic origin as a social construct that becomes mobilized around perceived accessible differences for political interests (Fenton, 2010; Jenkins, 2008a, 2008b; Malešević, 2004). While political action stemming from difference prefigures the provenance of an ethnic group, the symbolism of common ethnic ancestry eventually supplants political action as the believed ethnic group basis. In fact, "All history shows how easily political action can give rise to the belief in blood relationship, unless gross differences of anthropological type impede it" (Weber, 1978, p. 393).

When he writes that ethnic members believe in common ethnicity, but also that ethnic groups are inherently political and mobilized around communal interest, Weber (1978) suggests that ethnic groups are both communal (in their sentimental belief in common ancestry) and associative (in their strategic pursuits of common interests):

---

[8] In this particular excerpt, Weber uses "race" as an example. Elsewhere, however, he emphasizes that the characteristic chosen is irrelevant. Any marker of difference can be used in order to justify political action on closure.

> This artificial origin of the belief in common ethnicity follows the previously described pattern . . . of rational association turning into personal relationships. If rationally regulated action is not widespread, almost any association, even the most rational one, creates an overarching communal consciousness; this takes the form of a brotherhood on the basis of the belief in common ethnicity. (p. 389)

Ethnic members come to feel subjective and emotional (primordial) attachment to the group and thus perceive themselves as being in a communal relationship. But, in effect, the (perceived) communal relationship is initiated as an associative relationship—based on political action, common interests, and drawing boundaries from others.

Weber argues that ethnic groups can be open or closed. Recall from the earlier discussion that social closure (or, by extension, opening) occurs when there is a perceived interest in doing so. As with open membership, eligibility and access, the basis—or rather, pretext—for ethnic exclusion can be "any cultural trait, no matter how superficial" (Weber, 1978, p. 388). Once an ethnic group is constituted, any accessible differential trait, including conspicuous differences, for instance "in the styles of beard and hairdo, clothes, food and eating habits, division of labor between the sexes, and all kinds of other visible differences" (p. 387), suffice for the belief in "the excellence of one's own customs and the inferiority of alien ones, a conviction which sustains the sense of ethnic honor." For instance, Weber (p. 391) argued that the honour of "poor whites" in the south of the United States depends on the subordination of "blacks." These differences, then, give rise to "consciousness of kind, which become as easily the bearer of group relationships" (p. 387). They "can sustain a specific sense of honor or dignity" to the point that "the original motives or reasons for the inception of different habits of life are forgotten" and "the contrasts are then perpetuated as conventions" (Ibid). This is how ethnic characteristics become culture. In order for ethnic honour, consciousness, and culture to develop, a comparison with others needs to occur. Thus, despite occupying a low position in the social hierarchy, group

members may, nonetheless, regard their own ethnic group as superior to others. In multi-ethnic settings,

> ethnic coexistence based on mutual repulsion and disdain, allows each ethnic community to consider its own honor as the highest one; the caste structure brings about a social subordination and an acknowledgement of “more honor” in favor of the privileged caste and status groups. This is due to the fact that in the caste structure ethnic distinctions as such have become “functional” distinctions within the political association (warriors, priests, artisans that are politically important for war and for building, and so on). But even pariah peoples who are most despised (for example, the Jews) are usually apt to continue cultivating the belief in their own specific “honor,” a belief that is equally peculiar to ethnic and to status groups. (Weber, 1978, p. 934)

Since they are based on a sentimental belief in common descent, ethnic groups are a prime example of status groups. As noted earlier, Weber’s “status order,” developed via unequal distribution of power, assigns classes and status groups distinct places in society and determines the way they self-identify. Indeed, while some members of a group ranking low in the social hierarchy may indeed emphasize certain group distinctions in order to claim superiority to other groups, negative external group categorizations can also be internalized at both individual and collective levels, and both positive and negative group associations may be present simultaneously.

In sum, Weber argued that ethnic groups become constituted when boundaries from others are drawn in the context of political action. Ethnic culture, then, is used to draw comparisons with others and build a heightened sense of honour and superiority. Ethnic honour, built through comparison, can to some degree insulate ethnic groups from negative external influences. For Weber, therefore, ethnic culture and ethnic groups are sustained by drawing boundaries from others.

Barth on the Formation of Ethnic Groups

Drawing upon Weber's concept of social closure and Goffman's situationalist and interactionist approach, Norwegian anthropologist Frederik Barth was the first to explicitly introduce the concept of boundary into studies of ethnic groups. In his seminal work, Barth (1969, p. 9) challenged the hitherto dominant essentialist and deterministic views of ethnic groups as "aggregates of people who essentially share a common culture" and which are divided from other ethnic groups by "interconnected differences." Instead of defining ethnicity from the inside out, he defined it from the outside in (Malešević, 2004, p. 2).

Barth (1969, p. 15) argues that an ethnic group is not defined by its "cultural stuff"—in other words, language, religion, customs, history, culinary traditions, etc.—but by its boundaries from other groups. "Bosnianness," "Canadianness," or "Muslimness" become defined not in and of themselves, but in encounters with "Albanianness," "Americanness," "Arabness," etc. These boundaries and ethnic distinctions are maintained despite individuals crossing them and regardless of inter-ethnic interaction and participation. Importantly, stable social relations also persist, despite and often precisely because of "the dichotomized ethnic statuses" (Barth, 1969, p. 10). Boundaries, for Barth, are the very basis of and condition for the sustained existence of ethnic groups. Instead of viewing ethnicity as fixed, bounded, stable, and defined by shared culture, Barth thus grounds ethnicity in social relations.

In line with Weber, Barth (1969) emphasizes the strategic and political nature of boundary-making and group formation. There are no "objective" differences or similarities, only those features "which the actors themselves regard as significant . . . some cultural features are used by the actors as signals and emblems of differences, others are ignored, and in some

relationships radical differences are played down and denied" (p. 14).[9] The "socially relevant factors"—following Weber, also those that are easily accessible—become prerequisites for membership.

The cultural contents, as well as cultural and ethnic divisions and differences, emerge as by-products of the process of marking and maintaining boundaries. The perception of internal similarity is created by a production and reproduction of distinctions relative to others. Culture, for Barth, is constituted by interpersonal and inter-ethnic transactions. The "cultural contents" are then used to "look for and show identity," and as standards by which social actors judge and expect to be judged by other people (Barth, 1969, p. 14). This is akin to Weber's (1978, p. 387) understanding of cultural differences as merely the pretexts for "the inception of different habits of life," whose initial motives become forgotten and distinctions turn into conventions.

Barth has been criticized for eschewing the importance of the cultural contents of ethnic groups for their maintenance. For instance, Handelman (1977, p. 200) suggested that Barth failed to appreciate that "[c]ultural stuff" and ethnic boundary mutually modify and support one another. The former establishes and legitimizes the contrast of the boundary; while the latter, often in response to external conditions, modifies or alters the relevance to the boundary of aspects of the former.

In the article "Enduring and Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Ethnicity," Barth (1994) himself acknowledged that "rethinking culture provides a necessary basis for rethinking ethnicity" (p. 13). Barth nevertheless viewed culture as "in flux . . . contradictory and incoherent, and differentially distributed on variously positioned persons" (p. 14). Importantly, Barth (1969)

---

[9] This is precisely how members of Weber's ethnic groups "isolate" themselves from the denigration of others–via strategically selecting attributes that will, in their own opinions, elevate the importance of their

emphasized social actors' definition of (akin to Weber's "belief in") a situation: "ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves" (p. 10). For Barth, ethnicity serves to organize interaction between people. It is thus first and foremost geared towards individual decision-making and goal orientation. This view of ethnicity has also been criticized as too "materialistic, individualistic, narrowly instrumental" and neglecting structural constraints in the actors' "choosing" to self-identify one way or another (Jenkins, 2008a, p. 13; also Brettell, 2007; Jenkins, 2008b; Juteau, 2015, p. 13). Additionally, the emphasis on self-ascription neglects the importance of external categorization and the related power-issues of self-identification, and the associated boundary-making strategies (Jenkins, 2008a). The tension between agency (social actors' choosing of strategies or self-identification) and structural constraints (institutions, power, networks, cultural repertoires, etc.) is an important element of the boundary-making framework that assesses not only the mechanisms of individual and group boundary work, but also the local and, as will be argued, "imported" contextual factors that enable it.

Despite the criticisms, Barth's model of ethnicity has had an enormous impact on the study of ethnic groups and boundary-making. It produced a paradigm shift in research on ethnicity that was, in Malešević's (2004) words, "nothing short of a Copernican revolution" (p. 3). Attention was diverted from an ethnic group's cultural substance to the boundaries and relations with other groups. In emphasizing a constructed character of ethnicity, Barth encouraged a move away from biologically based understandings of "race" and ethnicity in social analysis (Jenkins, 2008a).

---

own group.

Goffman: Presentation of Self and Stigma

In the previous sections, I presented approaches that argue that "groups" become constituted based on interests and in interaction with others, who are viewed through the lens of their situationally salient group identity. In this section, I am moving away from discussions of (ethnic) group formation to focus on the mechanics of everyday boundary-making. The writings of Erving Goffman are especially useful in examining the dynamics of face-to-face interactions, particularly in the context of unequal power relations involving social actors from minority, marginalized, or stigmatized groups. Everyday discourse and face-to-face encounters are often key sites in which social actors draw social boundaries (Billig, 1995; Essed, 1991, Wimmer 2013).

In his seminal 1959 book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Erving Goffman used the metaphor of the theatrical stage to examine interpersonal interactions. When interacting with certain people in certain situations, we are onstage, engaging in performative practices in order to obtain information and control others' impression of us. First we look for the immediately available information, such as "general socio-economic status, his [sic] conception of self, his attitude toward them, his competence, his trustworthiness, etc." (Goffman, 1959, p. 1).[10] Goffman (1959) refers to these "appearances" as "those stimuli which function at the time to tell us of the performer's social statuses" (p. 24).[11] This available information sets parameters for the situation and orients expectations of behaviour of social actors toward each other. We assess and (externally) categorize the other person and adjust our expectations accordingly. The

---

[10] In Weberian terms, we use "available information" to draw boundaries and impose an impression. Impression-making is a type of boundary-making, or unmaking.

expectations and category contents are built socially, based on "previous experience with individuals roughly similar to the one before them or . . . [on] untested stereotypes" (p. 1). Previous experiences are also built through interactions based on social knowledge of the features at hand (often "stereotypes")—the two are inseparable from each other. At the same time, others use the same accessible criteria to assess and categorize us; an interaction is a process of mutual identification. As such, it is based on assumptions.

In an interaction, it is always our objective "to control the conduct of the others, especially their responsive treatment" of us (Goffman, 1959, p. 2). This impression management is a power game. We (inter)act strategically to (re)define the situation by presenting and performing situationally salient fragments of ourselves in order to convey an impression to others that it is in our interest to convey (p. 3). We may perform to confirm or subvert the expected behaviour depending on the impression we want to make: "While in the presence of others, the individual typically infuses his activity with signs which dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts that might otherwise remain unapparent or obscure" (p. 30). While these identity-enactments differ contextually, the goal is to, in that particular situation, present the performance as the "only routine or at least [the] most essential one" (p. 48). Identity for Goffman is a relational process of performing. And, in essence, impression management is a discursive and symbolic strategy of boundary-making.

For Goffman (1959), the motives behind projecting a particular self-presentation are not to achieve short-term goals or interests, but to avoid situational "embarrassment" and preserve long-term morality and dignity,

---

[11] Goffman does not mention gender, physical features skin, hair and eye colour, hair texture, bone structure, shape of the eyes, face, body, language, accent or clothing—features pointing to "race,"

> we must not overlook the crucial fact that any projected definition of the situation also has a distinctive moral character . . . Society is organized on the principle that any individual who possesses certain social characteristics has a moral right to expect that others will value and treat him in an appropriate way. Connected with this principle is a second, namely that an individual who implicitly or explicitly signifies that he has a certain social characteristic ought in fact to be what he claims to be. (p. 13)

Embarrassment occurs when a sense of dignity and honour is lost in a situation. Honour, as Weber noted, is concerned with status and privilege. By attempting to avoid feelings of shame, we are striving to achieve or maintain an equal or superior status in relation to the others we are interacting with. To recall, status, as an ideal, symbolic reward, can be related to material resources. Being respected can be a prerequisite for obtaining material resources. Conversely, being (perceived as) a member of a stigmatized group implies having a lower social status, which can adversely affect access to material rewards, such as employment.

Importantly, we do not invest the same degree of impression management into every interaction. When we are "backstage"—"the suppressed facts make an appearance" (Goffman, 1959, p. 69). This is a private space, where an individual may be alone or with trusted others. Goffman provides as examples the behaviour of team members, women in the absence of men (quoting Simone de Beauvoir), factory workers, service personnel and hotel staff when they are not being observed.

Presenting oneself in a particular light is especially consequential in the context of unequal social relations. Goffman, however, was widely criticized for making rare references to power relations, most trenchantly by Alvin Gouldner (1971), who wrote that "Goffman's rejection of hierarchy often expresses itself as an avoidance of social stratification and of the importance of power relations. . . thus, it entails an accommodation to existent power

---

ethnicity, sexuality, even level of religiousness.

arrangements" (p. 379). On the other side of the argument, Mary Rogers (1979) noted that power differentials are implicit in Goffman's work: "Specifically his insights point to the ways in which those with power can exploit dominant beliefs and value systems to maximise their preferred outcomes without engaging in influence as frequently or as pointedly as would otherwise be the case" (p. 10). Examples of these power-laden interactions in Goffman's work are exchanges between employers and employees, hosts and guests, doctors and nurses etc. (Jenkins, 2008c).

Those with less social power may have a greater need to perform. Impression management—as a boundary-making mechanism—is particularly significant when an individual is perceived (or self-perceives) as carrying a social "stigma." In his 1963 *Stigma*, Goffman examined the strategies that individuals develop to manage "spoiled identities." He defined stigma as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting" (p. 12). However, the attribute is not inherently good or bad, but acquires its meaning in relation to others: the presence of an attribute may stigmatize one individual, but normalize and confirm the "usualness" of another (Ibid). A sociological study of stigma, for Goffman, implies studying "a language of relationships, not attributes" (p. 3). Carrying a stigma thus hinges on external categorization and as such is rooted in unequal power relations.

Goffman (1963) emphasizes "visibility" as a crucial factor in the management of stigma, as appearance (assessed and categorized externally) is often the first clue to an individual's "social identity" (pp. 11, 64). He makes a distinction between discredited and discreditable stigmatized individuals. In the case of the former, the individual's "differentness" is immediately evident, whereas in the case of the latter, stigma is not immediately visible (p. 13). For discreditable stigmatized individuals, the issue then becomes about managing social information about the perceived "failing" (p. 55). Goffman offers many strategies individuals use to manage

stigma, such as correcting or compensating for a flaw, "normification" (i.e. presenting oneself as a "normal" person), disidentifying, changing names, "passing" as "normal," covering, defensive cowering, and accepting inferiority. Stigmatized individuals may reject stigma and construct "normal" as "not quite human," celebrate the stigmatized characteristics and advertise the stigma symbol, break with reality, refuse to be forced into a stigmatized category, avoid "normal," act out the imputed flaws in front of others, ally with sympathetic others, become politically active, or feel ambivalent towards the category, in which case the individual stratifies "his own" (pp. 129-130). As will be seen later in the chapter, these correspond closely to boundary-making strategies outlined by various scholars of boundary work.

Goffman has also been criticized for neglecting structural constraints in his situational analyses of face-to-face interactions and strategies (Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2010). For instance, he does not explain the social underpinnings of why certain traits are seen as "stigmatic" or "normal," but only hints at structural forces such as gender, race, religion, and class:

> In an important sense there is only one completely unblushing male in America: a young, married, white, urban, northern, heterosexual Protestant father of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight, and height, and a recent record in sports . . . Any male who fails to qualify in any of these ways is likely to view himself—during moments at least—as unworthy, incomplete, and inferior. (Goffman, 1963, p.128)

Granted, when Goffman (1963) states that "the finger tips of society have reached bluntly into the contact, even here putting us in our place" (p. 70), he seems to suggest that social actors' agency is limited by social and institutional factors and forces. He has thus been labelled a "micro-structuralist," applying "macro-level analysis (focusing on institutions, social structure and the normative order) to micro-level variables (face-to-face interactions)" (Bogue & Spariosu, 1994, p. 91; also Jacobsen & Kristiansen, 2010).

These criticisms notwithstanding, Goffman is useful for his analyses of interactions between individuals of (perceived) different social power, and their boundary-making strategies. It is in these micro-settings that comments are uttered, questions asked, looks given, and impressions made—acts which often form the basis of how we think the wider society views us. The way we (think we) we are categorized by others affects the way we categorize them and the others with whom we interact. Assumptions, true or false, are the basis of many interactions, and they can have very tangible effects. If a Canadian-born, French-speaking gay atheist with a name associated with Muslims and "darker skin" interacts with a Canadian-born, English-speaking, "white," Western-European, Christian-background individual, the latter may tap into their "social knowledge" (Goffman's "previous experience . . . or . . . untested stereotypes" (Goffman, 1959, p. 1) and assume that this person is a heterosexual, religious, foreign-born Muslim from the Middle East. These expectations may be accompanied by certain stereotypes, which the categorized might be conscious of. Depending on the former's interest in the current situation (for instance, in a job interview), they may engage in practices to correct these perceived assumptions. For instance, they may casually mention the fact that they were born in Canada (to correct any assumption they are an immigrant), or that they drink alcohol (to correct any assumption that they are religious), or speak Québécois French to hint at their native-born status.

This section on the conceptual foundations of the study emphasizes that identities and groups are constituted relationally and in interaction with others. People establish conceptualizations of "us" or "ours" when it is in their symbolic or material interest to differentiate themselves from "them" or "theirs" based on whatever available trait possible. These traits then become the basis for further self-identification and other-categorization. The following sections examine these processes in more detail.

“Identities” and “Groups” or Groups and Identities?

In *Economy and Society*, Weber (1978) referred to “race,” “ethnic,” and “national” identities (pp. 385, 390, 395). In his “Introduction” to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969), Barth talked about how “ethnic identity” constrains actors’ activities and interactions (p. 17). Goffman (1963) referred to an individual’s “category and attributes” as “social identity” (p. 11).

“Identity” remains a ubiquitous term in everyday, political, media, and academic discourses. It is most often understood as signifying the true, essential nature of “who I am” (on an individual level) or “who we are” (on a collective level). The *Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary* (2017) defines identity as “who someone is.” Several authors, however, have deconstructed the notion of “identity” as not “real” at all. Brubaker and Cooper (2000; also Brubaker & Cooper, 2004), drawing from Bourdieu, distinguish between identity as a “category of practice” and “identity” as a “category of analysis.” As the former, identity is used in everyday encounters to make sense of one’s “true” sense of self and one’s relations with others. It is also used by political entrepreneurs to “organize and justify political action” by appealing to the same, similar or different “identities” (Brubaker & Cooper, 2004, p. 32). As a category of practice, identity denotes a fixed, stable meaning; as a category of analysis, however, identity implies that “identities” exist and that people “have” them (p. 33). While Brubaker and Cooper acknowledge that many constructivist texts claim to avoid this trap by theorizing identity as “multiple, fragmented, and fluid” (Ibid), they ultimately denounce these formulations as a politically correct “uneasy amalgam of constructivist language and essentialist argumentation.” Malešević (2004) likewise problematizes the concept as covering “too much ground to be analytically useful” (p. 213).

Instead, Brubaker and Cooper (2004) propose we talk about cognition, "identification and categorization," "self-understanding and social location," and "commonality and connectedness" (p. 44). Understanding identity as relational focuses on the process and on people as "doers" and agents of identifying (p. 41), rather than on "identity" as something people have or "are." How we identify, characterize, or locate ourselves changes depending on the context and the situation:

> One may be called upon to identify oneself-to characterize oneself, to locate oneself vis-à-vis known others, to situate oneself in a narrative, to place oneself in a category-in any number of different contexts. In modern settings, which multiply interactions with others not personally known, such occasions for identification are particularly abundant. They include innumerable situations of everyday life as well as more formal and official contexts. How one identifies oneself—and how one is identified by others—may vary greatly from context to context; self-and other-identification are fundamentally situational and contextual. (p. 41)

Jenkins (2008a) agrees with Brubaker that identity does not determine what people do. Rather, individual behaviour "is a complicated outcome of conscious decision-making, habit, emotion, health and well-being, access to resources, knowledge and world-views[12]" (p. 25). However, rather than eschewing the term altogether, Jenkins (2008b) proposes, in agreement with Brubaker, that "identity" is not something one "has," but something one "does" (p. 5). The difference between Jenkins' and Brubaker's position appears to be one of terminology: both emphasize that the process is dynamic, rather than a static "being" or "having" of some true internal self.

Identification is also intimately tied with the politics of naming. In order to signal identity or identification, one needs to refer to oneself or others as "something." As Safran (2008) argued,

> Ethnonyms are not merely sociological categories or taxonomies; the label attached by a categoric group to itself is often an indication of that group's

[12] Similar to Michele Lamont's (1992) cultural repertoires.

> position in a given society and may be a harbinger of what it can expect in the future. Ethnonational labels reflect the sociopolitical context and attest to the degree of acceptance or rejection by a country or by the international community. (p. 438)

In the same vein, the way a group self-labels (chooses not to) can indicate wider social and ideological contexts (Safran, 2008). I argue that both identity and identification can co-exist. In this thesis, I will use both "identity" and "identification" depending on the perceived strength of attachment to a marker. For instance, for many of my participants, "Muslim" appears to be an identification—a name, in fact, rather than an identity, because of the changing historical and social characteristics and meanings of this category. By contrast, the ethnicity of Albanian participants in particular truly manifests itself as a primordial and unchanging identity, and something that they truly "are," while for Bosnian participants it appears less so. "Race," depending on how securely attached one feels to a "racial" category, can also range from being an identity, something one feels one truly "is" (e.g. for white supremacists), to an identification (e.g. Eastern Europeans, North Africans, Middle Easterners) whose racial categorizations and meanings vary in different geographical and social locales.

"Group" is another ubiquitous term in sociology and everyday and political discourses. In their discussions of ethnicity, Weber and Barth referred to "groups" and "ethnic groups," while Goffman speaks of "group formation" and "group superiority." In everyday life, individuals self-identify and categorize others as belonging to "groups," particularly those demarcated by ethnicity, nation, religion, or race. "Groups" are often imagined as bounded, relatively homogenous, and clearly demarcated from other "groups." They are often attributed "identity, agency, interests, and will" (Brubaker, 2002, p. 24). The idea of a "group" appears to be a common sense term, a sociological wisdom that needs not explanations (Jenkins, 2008b, p. 9).

This concept has also been contested in recent years. Brubaker in particular (1996; 2002; 2004) eschewed usage of the term because it refers to social actors' definition and categorization of social phenomena. In a Barthian manner, Brubaker (2002) argues that there is no such thing as a "group," but instead only moments of "groupness" that are activated when situationally cued (p. 19). Ethnicity, race, and nationhood and other "identities" are only cognitive processes and "frames, schemas, and narratives" through which individuals perceive, interpret, and represent the social world (p. 18). Instead of groups, Brubaker (2002) proposes using the term "categories" and focusing on "processes and relations rather than substances" (pp. 24-25). According to Brubaker (2004), "ethnic groups" do not participate in "ethnic" phenomena, specifically the ubiquitous "ethnic conflicts," because ethnic groups are not "entities" but "contingent events" (p. 11). Instead, individuals and organizations employ ethnic categories to "channel and organize processes and relations . . . make sense of problems and predicaments . . . articulate affinities and affiliations . . . identify commonalities and connections . . . frame stories and self-understandings" (p. 25). Rather than unidimensionally varying from weak to strong, groupness can measure both weak and strong on various dimensions of a sense of belonging (Lamont et al, 2016, p. 23).

Brubaker's criticism of the fixation with "groupism" has not been without criticism itself. Jenkins (2008b), for instance, agrees that groups are "real" only insofar as social actors think (*believe*¸ following Weber) that groups exist and that they belong to them. Jenkins eschews the "hard-nosed, almost puritanical, search for unambiguous analytical categories" and instead accepts everyday life's "fuzziness, ambiguity and paradox" and grounds his definition of a group in people's lived experience of a belonging to a "group" (p. 25). Without implying homogeneity or boundedness, Jenkins (2008a, p. 25; 2008b, Chapter 9) defines a group as "a human

collectivity the members of which recognize its existence and their membership of it." Because it is a feeling of "groupness" that constitutes "groups," Jenkins sees little sense in distinguishing between the two. Ruane and Todd (2004) likewise criticize Brubaker's cognitive approach for failing to appreciate that ethnicity in locales such as Northern Ireland is a social reality that orients social actors' everyday activities and is outside the reach of political entrepreneurs. Wimmer (2013, p. 85) concurs that, indeed, there are instances in which "ethnic boundaries are drawn unambiguously, [and] are agreed upon by a vast majority of individuals."

Internal vs. External Boundaries, Identifications, and Categories

The questions of identification and categorization bring us to the distinction between internal and external boundaries. This is the key tenet of Danielle Juteau's (1996; 1999/2015) theorizations of ethnic boundaries. Drawing on Max Weber's writings on ethnic communalization and ethnic group formation, Juteau (1999/2015, p. 21) argues that ethnic boundaries have two faces: an external and an internal one. Internal ethnicity is the result of socialization, historical memory, and culture, and includes what Barth referred to as "cultural stuff"—primarily history, but also language, religion, culinary traditions, and other cultural "substances" that are transmitted generationally. External ethnicity is constructed through encounters with others, often through immigration, colonization, annexation, etc., and is therefore often a result of imposition. The external boundary entails material and ideal interests, "control over the economy and the state, over institutions such as schools and social services, over culture and norms, over representation, over matters such as honour and prestige" (Juteau, 1996, p. 53). It is upon the imposition of such things as interests, political systems, language, religion, and laws that ethnic communalization occurs. In other words, following Weber, when "common qualities and common situation" (i.e.

markers and boundaries) meet, "social relations emerge which are based on the subjective feeling of belonging to the same community" (Ibid).

Juteau (1996) acknowledges that the internal and external "are analytically distinct, but constituted simultaneously" (p. 52). Following Weber, the internal face of the border (Barth's "cultural stuff") consolidates only in the presence of social actors perceived as belonging to other "groups" whose interests diverge from "ours." The internal is not separate from the external; rather, it emerges, changes, and persists in interaction with other "groups." Boundaries are drawn and redrawn by invoking different aspects of the "internal" cultural "content" based on whatever resources are available, as per Weber. History—Juteau's most important internal face of ethnic boundary—is made through interactions with others; for instance, language movements emerge when a language and its boundaries change if it is perceived that too many foreign words have entered the language. Ethnic groups that are different, but physically or "culturally" proximate, often claim variations of similar dishes as authentically "theirs." In fact, it is plausible that cuisine variations emerge, at least to some extent, in order to distinguish "our" variation from "theirs"; the same is true for traditional clothing, dance, etc. The "internal" often, if not always, emerges as a result of an external presence. In turn, the group will often resist external influence by invoking the "cultural stuff" to promote solidarity and even superiority. Juteau's demarcation between the internal and external is not atypical in studies of ethnicity, which have tended to stress internal definitions and group self-identifications (e.g. Cohen, 1985; Eriksen, 2010; Wallman, 1978; 1986). As noted earlier, both Weber and, to a much greater extent, Barth emphasized social actors' definition of a situation and self-identification as crucial. The latter is also implicated in the dominant conceptualizations of "identity" as being about "who I really

am" or "who we really are." A "group" is likewise imagined as having certain core characteristics, as defined by the group members themselves.

And yet, the manner in which an individual self-defines depends to a large extent on the perceptions of others. From primary socialization, the sense of "self" develops first in interaction with family members and then gradually extends outwards towards general society. In this process of identification, the individual and the collective occupy the same space: "Your external definition of me is an inexorable part of my internal definition of myself—even if I only reject or resist it—and vice versa" (Jenkins, 2008b, p. 47).[13] Definitions by others fall along a spectrum: they may be consensual, internalized and accepted as one's own, which occurs when internal and external definitions meet and merge; but they can also be imposed, resulting in a discord between how one sees (an aspect of) oneself and how others perceive one.

Ethnic and other "identities" and boundaries are likewise formed in interaction with others. Gradual and subconscious, people may understand their ethnic "identity" to be a result of (chosen) internal identification. However, self-identification seldom occurs independently from external influences. Social actors cannot truly "choose" or decide who they are or how they are seen. They can self-identify and they can be externally-categorized (Jenkins, 2008a, 2008b; Brubaker, 2004): "The first occurs inside and across the ethnic boundary, the second outside and across it" (Jenkins, 2008a, p. 23). Both are continually produced and reproduced in relation (and reaction) to one another and are therefore empirically difficult to disentangle.

As Weber and Barth theorized, ethnicity (and arguably other "identity" markers) is generated through interaction with others. What they failed to take into consideration is that

---

[13] Cooley's concept of the "looking-glass self" points in the same direction: the self(image) is constructed out of the impression of individuals appear to others (Jacobs, 2006).

external categorizations (grounded in power relations) can not only strengthen, but also generate ethnicities (Brubaker, 2004, p. 23). This is the crux of Jenkins's (2008a, 2008b) theory of external social categorization. For him, external categorization is a crucial dynamic of interpersonal and intergroup relations. It is thus couched in power relations, reflecting the capacity of the categorizer to successfully "impose its categories of ascription upon another set of people, and . . . the resources which the categorized collectivity can draw upon to resist, if need be, that imposition" (Jenkins, 2008a, p. 23; also Wimmer, 2013). Depending on the power relations, another group's external categorization may "carry more weight and be more consequential" (Jenkins, 2008a, p. 57). External definitions and categorizations are powerful acts:

> [T]he others here are the object(s) of the process of definition, and implied within the situation is a meaningful intervention in their lives, an acting upon them. Thus external definition can only occur within active social relationships, however distant or at however many removed . . . the capacity to intervene successfully in other people's lives implies the capacity—the power or the authority—to do so. The exercise of power implies competitive access to and control over resources, while authority is, by definition, only effective when it is legitimate. Power and authority are necessarily embedded within active social relationships. (Jenkins, 2008a, p. 55)

As for the categorized, the response to being subjected to categorization likewise hinges on how powerful the categorizer is. The categorized "group" may eventually internalize the external ascription. A group may use its "pre-existing established internal definitions . . . [to] provide a defence against the imposition of external definitions" (Jenkins, 2008a, p. 59). This may lead to resistance, reaction, reinforcement, or even the formation of group identity. A socially impotent group may attempt to counter-categorize a dominant (and by extension powerful) group, but this will likely will have little bearing on how the latter perceives itself or is seen by others, unless a significant number of socially powerless groups somehow coalesce in their categorizations of the

powerful group. Naming, as argued earlier, plays an important role in the process of both internal group identity/identification and external categorization. As Safran (2008) observed, naming is an interplay of internal and external factors: “Ethnic self-labeling may be a reflection of a group’s positive or negative image of itself; or it may be reactive insofar as it responds to the challenge created by others” (p. 438), and also “indicative of the position of a given categoric group in the eyes of outsiders” (p. 445).

“Groupness” (via external categorization, or naming) can thus be imputed onto individuals who share (or are perceived as sharing) a social characteristic, but who may not view themselves (primarily) in those terms. For instance, since 9/11, in both everyday and public discourses, “Muslims” are often referred to as a group, despite the heterogeneity of individuals of Muslim background in terms of citizenship, nationality, ethnic belonging, religious denomination, “race,” gender, class, and religiosity. If we return to the example of the male-presenting individual who is perceived as “dark skinned” or Middle Eastern and who has a “Muslim-sounding” name, many non-Muslims will likely tap into what Goffman referred to as “previous knowledge” or “untested stereotypes” and assume that the person is likely a heterosexual, religious Muslim (immigrant) from the Middle East, even though the person may be a Canadian-born gay atheist, or a third- or a fourth-generation biracial Christian. The assumption on the part of non-Muslim categorizers (depending on how much social power they hold)—or of “the state,” which imposes categories through censuses, job equity classifications, etc.—can have real-life ramifications for the categorized. Given that people do not typically publicly disclose their religious beliefs or sexual orientation, external categorizations (assumptions) often present the basis of social interactions and everyday boundary-making, especially in the case of minority, marginalized, or stigmatized groups, whose “differentials”

may be more noticeable and who have less power to assert the preferred “versions” of themselves (Goffman, 1959).

External categorization can lead to a (once again, situationally cued) formation of collective identities (Brubaker, 2004; Jenkins, 2008a, 2008b). The post-9/11 period has seen a coalescing of people with diverse national, ethnic, and “racial” backgrounds and gender who identify (or are externally categorized) as “Muslims” into “Muslims” as a supra-national, ethnic, racial, etc. “group”—in Meer’s (2010) words, a “sociological category” (p. 63).[14] Following Weber, the political origins of this grouping is akin to ethnic group formation. Ontologically, then, in certain contexts, Muslims can be considered a type of ethnic group. Categorization by (dominant, powerful) other individuals, or the state, can modify self-identification and consequently reposition an individual vis-à-vis a third individual (and a related group). In the case of Balkan immigrants, for instance, a hitherto dormant racial identity (due to a relative “racial” homogeneity of the home society) can become salient because of external categorization by the state (through census-taking, self-identification for employment purposes, etc.) or other individuals (via questions, remarks), thereby influencing the immigrant’s positioning towards newly discovered racially similar or different individuals.

Inspired by Colette Guillaumin’s writing about minority-majority groups, Juteau (2015, pp. 20-21) likewise emphasizes power relations in the construction of boundaries, focusing specifically on minority and majority ethnic groups. But even the designation of minority and majority is relative and relational: “On ne peut à aucun moment affirmer qu’il existe des groupes ou des systèmes hétérogènes, mais bien un système de référence par rapport auquel groupes

[14] Okamoto’s (2014) Asian American “panethnicity,” as well as Portes and Zhou (1993), and Portes and Rumbaut (2001)’s “reactive ethnicity” point in the same direction.

réels—tant minoritaires que majoritaire—se définissent différemment" (Juteau, 2015, p. 21). This is correct insofar as the relational approach is concerned, as an actor occupies many social networks of various references, "belongs" to various groups, and can simultaneously be part of a minority *and* majority group. In self-identifying or categorizing others as minority or majority, social actors employ different criteria. An individual residing in Canada can identify as belonging to an ethnic (Albanians, Bosnians) or religious (Muslim background) minority, but be part of the racial ("white") or gender (heterosexual) majority. Even in terms of ethnicity, which is often the basis for classifying groups into "majorities" or "minorities," the same individual may regard a group that self-identifies as a national minority (e.g. Canadian Francophones) as a majority even in locales where they are a minority. Albanian Muslim immigrants may regard themselves as a minority, foregrounding ethnic and religious "groupness," but African Canadians, foregrounding "race," may regard Albanian Muslims as being part of the "majority." Winter's (2011, p. 6) triangular model could be applied here. The model theorizes social compromises between two, often unequal, groups ("us" and "others") as due to the presence of a third, outsider group ("them"). In reality, and like Juteau's model, social relations are more akin to arrays of "overlapping sets of triangular relations" (Ibid). While Winter's model focuses on strategic alliances (in discourse at least) rather than perceptions of self and others, it could also be applied in the context of categorizations, as, following Weber, perceptions of similarity and difference precede the process of forming alliances or effectuating closures. Tentative "groups" —our perceptions of who belongs to a "group" and which "group" we belong to—are cognitively formed by coalescing several groups (e.g. Anglophone Canadians, Balkan Muslims; Anglophone Canadians, Francophone Canadians; Sudanese Canadians, Iranian Canadians) into one group ("white" people; "majority" groups; "visible minorities") ultimately impacting the

way that boundary openings (alliances) and closures (be they cognitive or practical) are produced.

The theoretical thrust of this study is that social compromises, closures, identifications, groupings, categorizations, names and labels are all forms of boundary work. While the previous section focused on the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of boundary-making, the following section examines the most recent contributions to the framework, focusing specifically on the question of motives and tension between agency and structure.

Boundary-Making: Recent Frameworks

As noted earlier, Frederik Barth was the first to explicitly introduce the notion of boundaries into studies of ethnicity. In the decades that followed, various social scientists used the concept to explore intergroup interactions. In her book *Purity and Danger* (1966), for example, anthropologist Mary Douglas showed how bodily boundaries are employed to define "us" in contrast to "others." In *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, Donald Horowitz (1985) wrote about how boundaries are maintained and reconstructed depending on context. Thomas Gieryn (1983), in his essay on how scientists discursively demarcate science from non-science, introduced the concept of "boundary work" that would a few decades later come to dominate the study of boundaries. Cultural sociologist Michele Lamont (1992, 2000, 2002) integrated these traditions into a framework that explains how drawing class and racial boundaries and creating categories of "us" and "them" create and sustain social inequality. Later, Andreas Wimmer, Roger Brubaker, Richard Jenkins, and Aristide Zolberg and Long Litt Woon, among others, significantly contributed to the study of ethnic boundaries.

Boundaries: Definitional Challenges

Pointing to differences in power, Lamont and Molnár (2002), drawing upon Bourdieu (1979) distinguish between symbolic and social boundaries. The former are "conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality" (p. 168). Individuals and their groups compete over which symbolic boundaries and principles of classification will be diffused and institutionalized. Such boundaries are thus instrumental for achieving status and monopolizing resources. Once they become objectified and are widely agreed upon, they become social boundaries, which are then manifested in "unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources (material and nonmaterial) and social opportunities," such as "social exclusion or class and racial segregation" (Ibid).

Andreas Wimmer (2013) conceptualizes boundaries as follows:

> [A] boundary displays both a categorical and a social or behavioral dimension. The former refers to acts of social classification and collective representation, the latter to everyday networks of relationships that result from individual acts of connecting and distancing. On the individual level, the categorical and the behavioral aspects appear as two cognitive schemes. One divides the social world into social groups—into "us" and "them"—and the other offers scripts of action—how to relate to individuals classified as "us" and "them" under given circumstances. Only when the two schemes coincide, when ways of seeing the world correspond to ways of acting in the world, shall we speak of a social boundary. (p. 9)

Wimmer (2013) thus theorizes boundaries primarily in terms of differentiation: "[E]thnic boundaries are the outcome of the classificatory struggles and negotiations between actors situated in a social field" (p. 79). However, this perspective has been criticized for neglecting both intra- and inter-group similarity and solidarity. Jenkins (2014), for instance, disagrees that solidarity emerges only out of differentiation, pointing to the powerful emotions of solidarity that

are produced through shared histories and symbols. In fact, Jenkins argues that emotions in general have been ignored by ethnicity scholars, a position that Brubaker (2014) echoes:

> To conceptualize all homophily as strategic is problematic: surely much homophily is entirely unstrategic, driven by a tacit sense of comfort, style, or pleasure. And since homophily, and the resultant patterns of differential association, are a matter of degree, it seems forced to sweep all homophily under the rubric of boundary-making. The language of boundary-making seems better suited to categorical prescriptions or proscriptions about who can or must or must not associate with whom than to ubiquitous gradational differences in patterns of association. (p. 806)

I concur with Jenkins and Brubaker insofar as "homophily" constituting a type of boundary-making. However, as Wimmer (2014) has argued in response, solidary association, at least to some degree, simultaneously involves disassociation, even if this is not evident or overtly strategic. Asserting similarity among group members implicates tacit differentiating from either other group members or members of another group. Also, asserting similarity with members of another group also often serves to, explicitly or implicitly, demarcate from a third group (Winter, 2011). Solidarity and homophily need to be understood as anchored in both intra- and inter-group social relations.

Boundary-Making and Strategizing: Agency vs. Structure

As noted earlier, Weber, Barth, and Goffman emphasized strategic decision-making as the basis of social action, ethnic group formation, and everyday impression and stigma management. Recent literature on ethnic boundaries likewise stresses that social actors behave strategically. For instance, Brubaker (2004) argues that

> ordinary actors usually have considerable room for manoeuvre in the ways in which they use even highly institutionalized and powerfully sanctioned categories . . . They are often able to deploy such categories strategically, bending them to their own purposes; or they may adhere nominally to official classificatory schemes while infusing official categories with alternative, unofficial meanings! (pp. 68-69)

Wimmer's (2013) theory of ethnic boundary-making likewise posits that actors behave strategically to gain recognition, power, or access to resources and claim an advantageous position relative to other individuals (pp. 44, 78).

This focus on strategizing has been criticized from several directions. Jenkins (2014) and Lamont (2014), for instance, argue that it neglects the emotional component of boundary-making and the role of recognition in motivating human activity. In fact, emotions and quest for dignity and respect are crucial in Lamont's conceptual framework. She argues that recognition "is central in establishing groups as worthy and valued members of the community, as individuals endowed with full cultural membership" (Lamont, 2014, p. 816). By generating distinctions, actors signal identity and develop a sense of security, dignity and honour. Similarly, boundary "patrolling" is oriented towards "avoiding shame and maintaining a positive self identity" (Lamont, 1992, p. 11).

Wimmer, however, treats honour and status (and, arguably, the resultant sense of personal dignity) as both motives *and* social prizes. If we go back to Weber, differences (demarcated by symbolic boundaries) are constructed in order to achieve status—an essential social resource—and maintain an "individual's sense of honour and dignity" (Weber, 1978, p. 391). Goffman likewise argued that the purpose of impression- and stigma-management is to attain or preserve a sense of dignity. By the same token, Wimmer (2013) argues that ethnic boundary-making "mixes" the various interests (ranging from group honour, moral dignity, personal identity, and access to professions, public goods, and political power) into "an intertwined struggle over who legitimately should occupy which seat in the theater of society" (p. 5). Achieving and maintaining social honour and personal dignity can be seen as a by-product of achieving status—which is an essential social resource. Quest for dignity, then, is also

achieved by boundary-manipulation, in other words, strategic acting: "[I]ndividuals behave strategically—even if their goal is mainly to enhance the recognition of their group's honour or their moral dignity or moral identity" (Ibid).

Strategic boundary-making has also been criticized for being too-heavily based on agency and neglecting structural constraints. Wimmer (2013), however, argues that structural conditions limit agency by determining "which types of boundaries . . . can be drawn in a meaningful and acceptable way in a particular social field" (p. 80). And yet, structural constraints are not absolute: as noted earlier by Brubaker, people have room to manoeuvre despite the restrictions. Once structural conditions are fulfilled, actors can employ a variety of available strategies to claim an advantageous position (p. 32). In particular, Wimmer stresses the importance of institutions, one's position in the power hierarchy, and networks in determining which boundaries will be drawn:

> [A]ctors are constrained, enabled, and enticed, first, by the institutional environment that makes it appear more plausible and attractive to draw certain types of boundaries—ethnic, class, regional, gender, tribal, or others. Second, the distribution of power defines an individual's interests and, thus, which level of ethnic differentiation will be considered most meaningful. Third, the network of political alliances will influence who will and who will not be counted as "one of us." (Wimmer, 2013, p. 90)

Wimmer focuses on the institution of the nation-state, which "disposes of considerable means to enforce particular categorical boundaries by making them relevant for the everyday lives of the population" (p. 90). For instance, whereas in England, migrant organizations self-identify according to the racialized boundaries of the nation, few migrant organizations in France identify as a racial minority, instead defining their status in terms of political and legal exclusion. Wimmer argues that national identities prevail in the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland at the expense of "race," which is "almost absent from the discursive repertoire of minority

politics—conforming to the way the national majority defines its boundaries toward immigrant others" (p. 92). In these institutional environments, actors will pursue a strategy that will further their interest "given [their] endowment with economic, political and symbolic resources"; in other words, depending on the individual's position on the power ladder (p. 93). Finally, where a boundary will be drawn depends on one's network of alliances (p. 95).

Jenkins (2014, p. 811) finds contradictory Wimmer's central argument that "individuals behave strategically" (Wimmer, 2013, p. 44), as well as Wimmer's many references to social structure. Jenkins (2014) agrees that individuals have agency, but argues against attributing too much power to social structure, which for Jenkins is merely "a pattern" (p. 811). Jenkins suggests that structure is not some kind of autonomous entity; rather, it is hegemonic agency, produced, reproduced, and institutionalized by people (as well as through previous, successful agencies and boundary-making efforts). Change (and, arguably, social boundaries) enacted by new actors may or may not become institutionalized and become social structure.

While claiming not to be anchored in structuralist tradition, Lamont (1992, p. 32) also identifies structural factors that shape, hinder, or facilitate social actors' boundary-making options and destigmatization strategies. Lamont's concept of "cultural repertoires"[15] is broader than Wimmer's typology of "social fields," and refers to "representations (identities, scripts, frames, myths, narratives, collective imaginaries," as well as institutions that feed into behaviours and social boundaries (Hall & Lamont, 2009, p. 4). Cultural repertoires are made available by "national historical and religious traditions and various sectors of cultural production and diffusion-intellectuals, the educational system, the church, the mass media" and by structural conditions, such as the market position, networks, community level of criminality,

social and geographic mobility, and the size of the welfare state (Lamont, 2000, p. 7). Corse (1997) provides another useful definition of cultural repertoires, as “the socially constructed, readily available cultural materials of a society—the archetypes, the myths, the epigrams and adages, the morals, the means-end chains, the evaluation criteria, the categorization schemas, all of the materials of shared ‘tool-kits’” (p. 156, in Lamont & Thévenot, 2000, p. 21).

It could be argued, even though Lamont does not point this out, that some social boundaries—as institutionalized symbolic boundaries—become cultural repertoires. As argued earlier, people make sense of the world by categorizing and drawing boundaries based on expectations and “knowledge” (Brubaker, 2004). Brubaker’s “knowledge” is a concept akin to Lamont’s repertoires: it is built by “beliefs and expectations . . . embodied in persons, encoded in myths, memories, narratives, and discourses, and embedded in institutions and organizational routines” (Brubaker, 2004, p. 72). What Lamont adds to this is the fact that relevant “knowledge” and the success of tapping into it vary contextually (culturally, geographically) and historically. For someone in the US it “makes sense” to draw upon the ideas of American Protestantism, pragmatism, and populism, and less so upon Catholicism, rationalism and populism, which are cultural repertoires endemic of France (Lamont, 1992, 2000). Institutional factors such as France’s extensive welfare system insulate social actors from market influences, making cultural boundaries more salient. By contrast, the US’s weak social programs make market and socio-economic distinctions more important than cultural boundaries for those from the upper middle class. Chapter 2 identified several national and cultural repertoires pertinent for this thesis: Canada’s multiculturalism and myths of tolerance, hegemonic whiteness, and Islamophobia. “Imported” cultural repertoires include the myth of Albanianism, former

---

[15] A related concept is “cultural tool-kits” (Swidler, 1986).

Yugoslavia's state mantra of "brotherhood and unity," and ethnic understandings of religious labels.

Typologies of Boundary-Making Strategies

Lamont and Bail (2006) distinguish between two strategies that minority, marginalized, or stigmatized groups develop to counter exclusion: universalizing and particularizing. The former refers to emphasizing general human morality, and the latter "reinterprets the stigmatized category in positive terms" (Wimmer, 2013, p. 47). Zolberg and Woon (1999) distinguish among the crossing, blurring, and shifting of boundaries as possible outcomes of negotiations between majorities and minorities in the West. Donald Horowitz (1975) discusses amalgamation and incorporation as types of fusion, and division and proliferation as subtypes of fission, which also correspond to Zolberg and Woon's types of boundary shifting. Wimmer (2013) has provided the most exhaustive typologies of boundary-making strategies yet, analyzing Western, non-Western, present, employing historical examples of how social actors attempt to draw boundaries.

Wimmer argues that this typology demonstrates how social actors use a finite number of strategies to draw ethnic boundaries. And yet at least one author, Li (2016), has already challenged Wimmer's claim by arguing, based on fieldwork, that social actors can shift (ethnic) boundaries "simply because doing so is fun" (p. 678). Thus, even though Jenkins (2014) has announced it is "time to move beyond boundary-making," the framework remains an attractive theoretical model for studying micro- and macro-level social processes, ranging from individual, group, and everyday interactions to institutional, media and political discourses and processes.

Boundary-Making and Stigma

While Goffman discussed various types of stigma with a focus mainly on individual strategies, Lamont (2009) has reinterpreted stigma-management strategies as types of boundary-making strategies employed by stigmatized and marginalized groups. Importantly, Lamont's destigmatization theory re-asserts the importance of national and cultural repertoires as structuring principles for the types of strategies chosen by stigmatized groups. For instance, American working classes choose asserting moral values and religious criteria as key strategies to counter stigmatization by dominant groups. The African American elite, on the other hand, does not rely on religion to cope with racism, instead emphasizing intelligence, competence, and education as the most effective strategies. Finally, marketing specialists of the African American upper middle class use consumption and buying power to assert self-worth. The celebration of economic success in American society thus facilitates "individualistic destigmatization strategies for better endowed individuals but may lead to passivity and withdrawal for those who are less well-endowed" (Lamont, 2009, p. 165). North Africans in France, on the other hand, employ "particular universalism" (p. 161), a type of moral universalism informed and made possible not only by Islam, but also by France's Republican universalism (p. 163). The social context can

thus facilitate or hinder the selection of certain strategies "through its collective myths, cultural repertoires, institutions, and so forth" (p. 153).

As noted earlier, scholars of boundary-making disagree about the extent to which social actors draw boundaries strategically. Lamont, for instance, equates strategizing with conscious intention. She criticizes Wimmer for overemphasizing strategic acting, arguing that "cultural processes are not necessarily oriented towards ultimate instrumental goals such as gaining resources or exercising power" (Lamont, 2014, p. 816). Individuals are "rarely conscious that they inhabit categorization systems. Instead, they tend to use schemas that are largely taken for granted and made available by the national cultural repertoires that surround them" (Ibid). In response, Wimmer (2014) argues,

> If ethnic boundaries are associated with high degrees of social closure, cultural differentiation, and widely agreed upon . . . they indeed become taken for granted, routinized and "constitutive of reality," à la Luckman and Berger. In other contexts, however, they represent classificatory elements to which individuals maintain considerable reflective distance and that are therefore not preconfiguring their everyday experience. (p. 840)

Citing the theory of frame selection (Esser, 2002; Kroneberg, 2005), Wimmer (2013) also writes,

> Actors first choose a cognitive scheme appropriate to the institutional environment and conducive to their perceived interests and then the script of action most suitable to attain the goals defined by the scheme . . . both choices are made either in a fully conscious, reflexive mode of reasoning or in a semiautomated, spontaneous way. (p. 93)

Intuition, according to this model, does not preclude strategizing. Arguing that social actors behave strategically does not imply espousing rational choice theory or eschewing subconscious behaviour. Rather, social actors' strategizing can be intuitive—in fact, strategizing can often seem (or be) irrational rather than rational, what Kroneberg (2014) refers to as "variable rationality." Acting strategically in a situation does not mean that all options have been examined (even though this can be the case), but that in a specific circumstance a strategy (premeditated or

not) is employed, regardless of whether it achieves an objective. Most importantly, while Wimmer argues that strategic boundary-making (and unmaking) semi-automatically adapts to the "institutional environment," the same logic can be applied to Lamont's cultural repertoires: that is, it is possible for a social actor to (semi)spontaneously draw those boundaries that fit their national and cultural contexts.

Whether a social actor strategizes consciously or intuitively may be related to their position in the hierarchy of power. Wimmer (2013) argues that this position in fact determines the type of boundary-making strategy an actor will pursue: for instance, the strategy of contraction, which is, as we will see later, the strategy most commonly used by participants in this study—"drawing narrower boundaries and thus disidentifying with the category one is assigned to by outsiders"—is an attractive strategy for those who "do not have access to the centres of a political arena and whose radius of action remains confined to immediate social spaces" (p. 55). In other words, those of limited access to power in the social hierarchy may be unable to challenge dominant cultural repertoires (i.e. Islamophobia and the dominant meanings of Muslim) and therefore resort to disidentify from the category, in locales ("immediate social spaces") where they (feel they) can exert influence, such as their circles of family and friends, within the "ethnic" community, and in immediate interactions with other members of the society.

However, one can argue that an actor's power position also determines the need for and the extent of strategic boundary work. Actors carrying social stigmas are not privileged to have their choices align with dominant social boundaries and structural conditions. The latter emerge and become institutionalized as a result of the coalescing of dominant interests, social boundaries, or previous social change and activism. The more privileged groups (marked by class, gender, race, ethnicity, religion) a social actor (putatively) "belongs" to, the more they

subconsciously rely on the dominant schemes and scripts. Since individuals belonging to dominant groups already have access to resources and more power, and draw on shared, widely accepted cultural scripts that they most likely inherited, they do not need to question or subvert the structural conditions. Their strategic acting will be more subconscious and intuitive than that of an individual self-identifying or categorized as belonging to a minority, marginalized, or stigmatized group. The latter might seek to subvert these scripts, becoming more creative and consciously strategic to gain access to resources (including respect and dignity).

Lamont et al. (2016) distinguish between discrimination and stigmatization. The former refers to incidents in which social actors are deprived of opportunities and services, such as jobs and housing, because of markers of differentiation, such as race, ethnicity, or religion (p. 7). Discrimination appears to be more institutional in nature. Stigmatization, in contrast, refers to incidences of microaggressions[16] in which social actors feel their sense of self, worth, dignity, or social status is offended. Incidences include jokes, double standards, exclusion from informal networks, physical assault, stereotyping, being ignored, and "intrapsychic experiences" such as the other person behaving surprised or stepping back (p. 7). To remind, Goffman (1963, p. 12) defined stigma as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting"; it is a signifier of lower status, one that we have come to accept (and even celebrate), but which we understand to have the potential to produce a distancing effect on those we are in an interaction with. Stigmatization, then, is the process of rendering these attributes negative. Importantly, stigmatizing microaggression is regarded as anchored in macro-phenomena such as institutions, organizations, power

[16] Sue (2010) defines microagressions as "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership." It is important to note again that microaggression, as well as hate crimes—as the 2017 Statistics Canada report on hate crime noted—can also occur due to an externally assumed "group membership."

distribution, and social networks (Wimmer, 2013), as well as national and cultural repertoires (Lamont, 1992, 2000, 2009) and knowledge built on beliefs, myths, memories, narratives, and discourses (Brubaker, 2004). In everyday life, stigmatization occurs via microagressions; in broader social contexts, e.g. in the media, it occurs via misrepresentations or stereotypical representations of a group whose defining feature in that context comes to be understood as predominantly negative or of lower status. In boundary-making terms, a stigmatizing feature presents a firm boundary between the stigmatized and others. De-stigmatization, in turn, is the process of attempting to modify the boundaries between the stigmatized and the broader society (which includes the stigmatizers who employ the abovementioned microaggressions and misrepresentations) with the aim of alleviating or overhauling the stigma and reaching the desired or restoring one's previous social status. In this process, affected individuals engage in the process of "managing" social information about the stigmatizing feature. For instance, in this study, participants use various strategies to alleviate the collective stigma (of being Muslim), some by "educating" the broader public about Muslims, but mostly, by modifying, distancing or completely disidentifying from their Muslim identification.

Boundary Work in Practice

The following section outlines various destigmatization and boundary-making strategies that minorities, Muslims in particular, employ in the West to counter stigma related to a minority-identity. It also explores the cultural relationship between Balkan Muslims and Christians in homeland and immigration settings.

Minority groups have used religiosity and religious markers to re-position boundaries and offset racial or religious stigma. Several studies have shown that Somalis in Canada have become more religious and tend to foreground their Muslim identity not only to counter religious

stigma, but also to disidentify from other black people (Ajrouch & Kusow, 2007; Berns-McGown, 1999). Nagra's (2017) study of young Canadian Muslims of non-European background likewise documents that the experiences of increased state and societal surveillance led participants to engage in a "reactive identity formation"—embracing, rather than rejecting or distancing themselves from, their Muslim identity. Likewise, a 2016 Environics Institute survey found that the majority of young Muslims, most of whom were Canadian-born, feel Muslim first and Canadian second. Importantly, the study found that among Muslim immigrants, attachment to Islam is "is more likely to have strengthened than weakened since moving to Canada" (p. 15). In response to racism and discrimination, Lamont's North African participants living in Paris reconceptualized their religion as "a particular universalism, a moral universalism informed by Islam" in order to fit the French narrative of universalism and claim superiority over the French (Lamont, 2009, p. 161). A non-Muslim example includes Ethiopian and Mizrahi Jews in Israel who foreground their Jewish identity in order to counter racial stigmatization from European-origin Israelis (Mizrachi & Herzog, 2012).

Religious markers can also be used to signal similarity to or difference from others. Ajrouch's (2004) study of Arab American adolescent girls found that participants used the wearing of the hijab to claim superiority over American girls, whom they viewed as "morally suspect" (p. 382). Other studies have likewise shown that Muslim women may choose to start wearing religious garments in order to show resistance to mainstream norms (Ahmed, 2011; Borghée, 2012; Bowen, 2007; Clarke, 2013; Franks, 2000; Hoodfar, 2003; McDonough & Hoodfar, 2005; Ruby, 2006). In contrast, Balkan Muslims emphasize the "European" and tolerant character of their faith to counter Islamophobic narratives (Clayer & Bougarel, 2017; Merdjanova, 2013). A study by Lucken (2010) found that Bosnian Muslim refugees living in the

United States mark their "unique brand of Islam" as European, open, less strict than in non-European Islamic countries, and "cultural" (characterized by eating pork, drinking moderately, and not wearing the hijab). They present this version of "European Islam" as blending easily into American pluralism. Ameeriar (2012) has also observed that non-white Christians, often those of Middle Eastern origin, may wear visible religious symbols to disassociate themselves from religions their "appearance" is often associated with, most commonly Islam.

Ajrouch and Kusow's (2007) study of Lebanese Muslims in the United States provides insight into the importance of racial, national, and cultural repertoires for boundary-construction. In Lebanon, Islam acts as an "integral force" that organizes social life, "an implicit element of everyday" that "shapes the nature of daily interactions" (p. 75). Race is not a salient category, unlike in the United States, where people of Middle Eastern background are officially classified as "white." The study revealed that Lebanese people in the US take advantage of the availability of the cultural repertoire of whiteness to draw racial boundaries, build on "white privilege," and dissociate themselves from the negative public perception of Islam. Participants, however, spoke of privileges associated with whiteness (e.g. freedom) without explicitly referring to themselves as white, thereby attesting to whiteness being "an unspoken privilege, an identity that does not always require direct, verbal reference" (Ajrouch & Kusow, 2007, p. 83; also McIntosh, 1989). This alliance with the dominant white majority was successful, however, only insofar as signs of their religiosity remained invisible. Once a religious "announcement" was made, as when a participant was called out by an American neighbour after being seen wearing a hijab, the racial privilege dissipated, and the Lebanese again became seen as a minority.

A study by Ajrouch (2004) found that, in contrast to Lebanese immigrants in the US who take advantage of their official classification as "white," adolescents who identify as Arab

Americans define themselves variously in relation to different reference groups. On the one hand, they employed boundary modification-assimilation (Wimmer, 2013) in order to get closer to the "white" category of "Americans" and distance themselves from newly arrived immigrants ("boaters"), who were perceived as not American enough due to their accents, style of clothing. etc. On the other hand, participants also rejected whiteness, which they associated with immorality, particularly when applied to "white American girls" (Ajrouch, 2004, p. 381).

While research on the ethno-religious and racial experiences of Balkan Muslims in immigration settings is scarce compared to other minority groups, there is evidence that they too have taken advantage of the available racial-majority repertoire in their host countries. Even though geographically European and statistically "white," the "whiteness" of Eastern Europeans has been discursively questioned and is contingent on the social context in which they are evaluated (e.g. Miskovic, 2003, 2007; Todorova, 2006; Van Riemsdijk, 2010). While "race" is not a salient category of classification in the Balkans, "whiteness" has been observed as a boundary-making strategy among Balkan immigrants in the West. Colic-Peisker and Walker (2003) observed that their Bosnian participants saw Australia as a "white country" and used their European origin and whiteness to compare themselves favourably with Asian or African refugees. They also did not identify or associate with other Muslim communities and used their Europeanness to distance themselves from the adverse public image of Islam. Mai's (2005) study on the experiences of Albanian immigrants in Italy documented that local Italians expressed surprise because Albanians looked "white," to which one Albanian participant responded by asserting an unquestionable racial similarity with the host population (pp. 554–555). As a non-Muslim Balkan example, Moroşanu and Fox's (2013) study of Romanians found that that their participants used their whiteness to alleviate the stigma of being frequently externally

categorized as the Roma. Despite the fact that they themselves were racialized as dubiously white by British tabloids (Fox, Moroşanu & Szilassy, 2012), they strategically used "whiteness" as the most available and straightforward way to "educate" others about the difference between Romanians and the Roma, and thus open relations with the dominant majority.

Several studies have documented that names, in conjunction with skin tone and/or religious signs, serve as markers of Muslimness (Carr, 2016; Gupta, 2004; Triandafyllidou, 2010). As Goffman (1963) observed, stigmatized individuals may choose to change their name in order to attenuate stigma. Khosravi (2012) and Bursell (2012) find that Muslims in Sweden who changed their names did so to avoid discrimination. Interestingly, Khosravi's (2012) participants of Middle Eastern background who felt they could racially "pass" as Swedes felt that their names were incompatible with their appearances (p. 76). Others reported that discrimination based on their Middle Eastern appearance persisted even after the name-changing.

As noted in the previous chapter, the question of how European the Balkan region is is ever-present at all levels of Balkan societies. Balkan ethnics and nations have used various strategies and markers of identification to assert their Europeanness and demarcate themselves from their neighbours. As Ditchev (2002) and Goldsworthy (1998/2012) observed, Greeks rarely refer to themselves as "Balkan" and instead tend to foreground the position of their country as the cradle of European civilization. In immigrations settings, Seraidari (2012) found that Turks living in Brussels are more likely to identify positively with the Balkans, assert the Ottoman Empire's past rule over the region, and thereby claim European space. Greeks living in Brussels, on the other hand, tend not to identify positively with the Balkans, and when they do, to use it as an option among others. In a similar vein, Romanians invoke their Latin (i.e. Western) origins to differentiate themselves from "Eastern" Slavs (Cioroianu, 2002). Croats emphasize their

Habsburg legacy and Catholicism to assert themselves as Western and distant from the formerly Ottoman, Orthodox, and Muslim peoples (Arat-Koç, 2010; Bakić-Hayden, 1995; MacDonald, 2002; Petrović, 2008, p. 73). Razsa and Lindstrom's (2004) analysis of Croatian newspaper columns, political cartoons, government documents, and speeches from the 1990s shows that Croatian elites employed stereotypes of the Balkans as backward and primitive to distinguish themselves from and define Croatian identity in opposition to the Serbs, "the epitome of a Balkan people" (p. 648). Thompson (1994) likewise found that news reports in the Croatian media on the 1990s war systematically placed Croatia in "Europe" while condemning "the barbarity of the aggressor and its lack of culture" (p. 175). In immigration settings, Croats in Canada (Winland, 2007) and Australia (Skrbiš, 1999) define themselves primarily by differentiating themselves from Serbs and asserting themselves as Europeans.

Re-applying the same tropes of European civilization assigned to them by their Western neighbours (Croats and Slovenians in particular) and Western Europeans, Serbs tend to differentiate themselves from Albanians, mainly Albanian Muslims, by marking them as "savages that need to be civilized, barbarians and intruders characterized by violent and deviant sexual behaviour" (Petrović, 2008, p. 73). In his analysis of the writings of Serbian intellectuals in the 1990s, Cigar (2003) found that Serbian nationalist elites, in a mission to "warn" the "unsuspecting West," represented the "Muslim problem" as part of a "broader, unified Muslim threat applicable to the entire West" (p. 328). Erjavec and Volčič's (2008) analysis of how young Serbian intellectuals interpreted global reactions to the publication of the Prophet Muhammad cartoons found that participants reframed the "cartoon crisis" by labeling Muslims as fundamentalists and terrorists in order to legitimize Serbian nationalistic ideology and Serbian military actions against Bosnian and Kosovo Muslims in the 1990s. In immigration settings,

Bock-Luna (2008) observed that her Serbian American participants mostly constructed Bosnian Muslims as Serbs who were forced to convert to Islam during the Ottoman Empire rule. However, many participants expressed “happiness” following the events of 9/11 because the “Islamic threat” the Serbs had experienced in Bosnia and that was supported by the West was “at last” being recognized as the enemy (Bock-Luna, 2008, p. 89). Studies have also observed this shifting of boundaries among Croats in Australia during the 1999 wars in Bosnia and Croatia. For Australian Croats, generally, Bosnian Muslims did not represent “real” ethno-national categories, as there was no “legitimate historical reasons for their existence” (Skrbiš, 1999, p. 115). Skrbiš (1999), however, observed that the boundaries between Croats and Bosnian Muslims shifted depending on whether they were allies at the moment: while the Australian-Croatian Radio always called Serbian soldiers the pejorative Četniks, the labelling of Bosnian Muslims varied from neutral language to “Muslim fundamentalists” (p. 91).

Finally, it has also been argued that Balkan Muslims put forward their indigenous Europeanness to demarcate themselves from the non-European Muslims (Bakić-Hayden, 1995). In a study of Bosnian refugees living in the US, Lucken (2010) found that some of her Bosnian Muslim participants preferred identifying as European over Muslim and emphasized their secular upbringing. Lucken interpreted the sense of being “more cultured than other immigrant groups” as a strategy of compensation for the loss of status in their new communities (p. 202). More recently, Waltzer’s (2015) study of Balkan Muslim immigrants in Luxemburg likewise found participants distance themselves from religion and different groups of Muslims in order to represent themselves as Europeans. Interestingly, these authors did not explore the role of “race” in these dynamics, despite the concept of “Europeanness” being historically tied with that of “whiteness” (Chapter 8).

Conclusion

This chapter explored in more detail the theoretical and conceptual foundations of boundary work, reinterpreting the key concepts of Max Weber, Frederick Barth, and Erving Goffman as boundary-making tools. The tension between social actors' motives (emotions or interests), as well as control (the question of agency) and the power of "others" (external categorization), in the process of self-identification and boundary-making strategies was examined in more recent contributions to the framework. I argued that boundary work, self-identification, external categorization, and the success of related strategies were all anchored in and/or conditioned by structural restraints. As Wimmer (2013) has argued, consensus on the "location and meaning of boundaries enhances their politicization and social closure along these divides" (p. 204).

The research objective of the thesis is to learn about the experiences of Canadian Muslim immigrants from the Balkans in the post-9/11 era, in which Muslims are increasingly subject to public scrutiny and stigmatization. Based on the theoretical and conceptual framework, this study asks the following questions: How have Albanian and Bosnian Muslims in Canada responded to the post-9/11 stigmatization of Muslims? More specifically, what boundary-making strategies have they employed? Which Canadian groups are relevant in Balkan Muslims' construction of boundary-making/destigmatization strategies? How have they positioned and defined themselves in relation to them? Which national and cultural repertoires have they resorted to? In answering these research questions, I employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. The following chapter provides details on the study's methodological approach.

Chapter 4

Methodology

I employ a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to answer the study's research questions. I derive the quantitative data from Statistics Canada surveys—specifically the 2001 census, the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), and the 2013 General Social Survey (GSS) on Social Identity—and present these findings in Chapter 5. This chapter focuses on the methodological approach used to conduct the original, qualitative portion of the study. The original data used in this study are derived from interviews with 17 Albanian and Bosnian Muslim immigrants. While the findings of the quantitative analysis provide general insights into ethnic, religious and racial identifications of Balkan Muslim immigrants in Canada, they do not explain the reasons behind the trends. Employing qualitative methods allows for a deeper understanding of participants' experiences as Muslims in Canada (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). As the subsequent chapters will show, the findings from both analyses complement each other and provide a more complete picture of these communities' experiences.

I used semi-structured, in-depth interviews to ask questions about how participants feel as Muslims in Canada, especially in the post-9/11 period. The questions were formulated to elicit responses providing insight into the types of boundary-making strategies participants use to counter anti-Muslim stigma, as well as the cultural repertoires they resort to in order to build their strategies. In-depth interviews are suitable for answering research questions that seek knowledge that is often taken for granted, not readily articulated, involves conflicted emotions, and may elicit complicated, multiple perspectives (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012), particularly for marginalized groups (Esterberg, 2002, p. 87). The interview method also provides access to "the

context of people's behaviour" and allows the researcher to understand the meaning of the behaviour (Seidman, 2006).

Criteria for Participant Selection

The criteria for inclusion in the study were that the interviewees were Albanian or Bosnian immigrants who resided in Canada and who identified either as Muslims or as persons of Muslim descent, even if they were of mixed religious origins and regardless of their religious beliefs. While most qualitative studies of Muslims require their participants to identify as Muslim (e.g. Nagra, 2017), I broadened the criteria for inclusion. I did so taking into consideration the historical context of Balkan Muslims, specifically the following: the ethno-religious diversity of the Balkans; the legacy of communism in Yugoslavia and Albania since the Second World War; the secularist politics of Albania, Bosnia, and, since 2008, Kosovo, following the fall of communism; the historical sway of the "European identity" narrative in the region; and the ethnic character of the "Muslim" designation in the case of Bosnian Muslims.

I expected—and both quantitative and qualitative evidence support this—that for the potential participants, the Muslim identity would not be a straightforward, linear reflection of their religiosity or descent. Rather, it would be a vivid illustration of Brubaker's (2004) situationally cued segment of an identification, a multifaceted category that participants have gone in and out of, and whose meaning has changed over time and across space. As Southeastern European Muslim immigrants, participants would not be in a position of power (Wimmer, 2013) to impose preferred meanings of themselves or the cultural repertoires they "imported" with them in the Canadian context (Goffman, 1959). Because of this, how they choose to identify is not as significant as how they, as members of minority and marginalized groups, are categorized externally.

Indeed, as the qualitative evidence will show, most of the participants, being unable to impose the "imported" cultural repertoires of "Muslim" meaning(s) from their home countries, they responded to Islamophobia by disidentifying, or distancing themselves from the dominant meaning(s) of "Muslim" in the Canadian and Western contexts. As argued in the previous chapter, a "darker-skin" person with a "Muslim" or ambiguous name will likely be externally categorized as Muslim, even if they are an atheist of Muslim descent or religious Christian from the Middle East. Indeed, the inclusion in the study not only of those who not identify as Muslims, but also those who identify as being of Muslim descent, but are uncertain to what extent they identify with the religion, uncovered a range of complex and confused narratives about who they are as "Muslims" in Canada in the second half of the 21st century; for example, one participant identified as both atheist and Muslim, did not eat pork, but also did not disclose her religious origins in public; another participant of mixed Muslim-Orthodox Christian descent who was also an atheist proudly identified as Muslim in public, especially when she encountered Islamophobia; one participant identified as "spiritual" and, despite her Muslim descent, was unsure as to whether she was Muslim or not; and, finally, a participant who referred to himself as a "moderate but practising Muslim" also drew firm religious boundaries between "European" Muslims (described as liberal and open-minded due to their irreligiosity[17]) and non-European Muslims (described as conservative and close-minded due to their religiosity).

I also chose, for several reasons, not to limit my potential interviewees in terms of their current age or age at arrival in Canada. While both these factors certainly affect personal

---

[17] In this study, I use the terms "irreligiosity" and "non-religiosity" to refer to what Tomlins and Beaman (2015) call "religious nones." This term may include those who think of themselves as "agnostic, atheist, agnostic-atheist, apathetic, anti-theist, bright, freethinker, humanist, irreligious, materialist, naturalist, rationalist, sceptic, secularist, a mix of these descriptors, or something else altogether" (Ibid).

experiences, as well as integration into Canadian society, I was interested in a broad range of stories and experiences. As the empirical chapters will demonstrate, the commonalities between the boundary-making strategies of participants who are in their 20s versus those in their 60s, or those who arrived in Canada as children versus as adults suggests that limiting recruitment to an age group would not necessarily have yielded significantly different findings. Finally, Albanian and Bosnian Muslims constitute a relatively small immigrant community of only about 20,000 people, and, as the study will show, many form insecure attachments to their religious origins. Keeping the participation criteria broad ensured that I included the "most typical" members of the ethno-religious groups in the study.

Process of Recruitment

I recruited participants using a variety of strategies. I initially resorted to community networks, contacting ethnic (Albanian and Bosnian) and Muslim community associations, minority-language media, as well as embassies. I also posted advertisements in ethnic stores. This form of recruitment, however, yielded no results: I received either no response or the response that the organization would simply inform the members of the research. No participant contacted me because they had heard of the research from any of the organizations disseminating the word. I will discuss possible reasons for the difficulties in recruitment throughout this chapter. It is important to note that the seeming apathy towards the study on the part of institutional representatives of these communities (and the corresponding lack of community access) limited the option of acquiring additional evidence via unobtrusive methods such as participant observation.

In the end, the most effective recruitment strategy turned out to be through social media, specifically Facebook. Facebook is emerging as a key channel for participant recruitment, in particular of specific populations such as ethnic groups (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Ritchie, Lewis, Elam, Tennant & Rahim, 2014). All but one of my "seeds" (Patton, 2015) or "first-wave responders" (Miriam & Lamonica, 2015) were recruited through social media. I created a Facebook profile specifically for the study project using my real name. I accessed Albanian and Bosnian Facebook groups and pages to advertise the research. These were mostly groups and pages of ethno-cultural organizations. The benefits of using Facebook groups was that, depending on the type of group and group setting, it was often possible to see exactly how many members viewed the post. Despite the high numbers of viewers, however, I received few e-mails expressing interest in the study. I thus most often solicited interested participants by directly contacting group members who "liked" my Facebook post, asking them if they would participate in the study or knew someone who would qualify.

I also used snowball sampling to recruit participants. At the end of each interview, I asked participants if they knew of other potential interviewees. In order to avoid over-sampling from one chain, I restricted the number of referrals to a maximum of three. In the case of my 11 Albanian participants, four participants were part of the same chain, and the remaining seven were first-wave respondents. In the case of my six Bosnian participants, four participants were part of the same chain (the first respondent referred two second respondents, and one second referred a third respondent), and two were first respondents. On the one hand, this is a small qualitative study that focuses on generalizing findings only to the sample, instead of the population. On the other hand, given the small number of Bosnian participants, and the fact that more than 60% were part of the same chain, some differences in findings between Albanian and

Bosnian participants, especially pertaining to the importance of ethnicity, need to be interpreted with caution.

It is common in the process of participant recruitment for interview studies to not go as well as the researcher(s) predicted. The difficulties I faced were related to the relative small size of the group, my profile as an insider/outsider, and the sensitive interview topic. During the recruitment period (May 2015–May 2017), there were regular reports of terrorists attacks committed mostly by the Islamic State,[18] ostensibly in the name of religion. I would typically refrain from recruiting participants for a few weeks following any large, extensively mediatized terrorist attack, as I felt that the events would have deterred many potential participants from talking about their experiences. I interviewed a participant the morning before the attack on the mosque in Quebec City in February 2017. At the end of the interview, he promised to spread the word about my research and appeared truly eager to help me recruit more participants. However, when I contacted him after the attack to offer my condolences, although he did thank me, I never heard from him again. In another case, I interviewed a participant a few days after the attack in a public place in the province of Québec; while he insisted that he did not feel any different than before the attack (because members of his ethno-religious group were not religious and typically did not go to mosque), I also noticed that he would lower his voice to utter the word “Muslim.” A few other participants said they would spread the word about the study, but admitted that most

---

[18] The attacks that garnered most attention in the Western media include the October 2015 Ankara bombing and the destruction of the Russian plane; November 2015 Paris attack; the March 2016 Brussel bombings; the June 2016 Orlando, Florida, attack; the July 2016 truck attack in Nice, an attack on a church in France, and a suicide bomb attack at a music festival attack in Germany; the December 2016 truck attack in Berlin; the March 2017 car attack outside the Westminster Palace; and the May 2017 suicide bombing at the Ariana Grande concert in Manchester. Numerous other attacks were also committed in non-Western countries, mostly Iraq and Syria.

people they knew would not be interested in talking about being Muslim in Canada, or such weighty matters as terrorism, racism, and being "white."

Most of the participants said that they agreed to participate in the study to "help me out" because they recognized from my first and last name that I was a fellow Balkan immigrant. In addition, some participants said they assumed that I would have a difficult time finding participants for a study of Muslims, given that most Balkan Muslims are not (very) religious. One participant was very straightforward about why he decided to participate: in addition to wanting to help a fellow Balkan immigrant with her project, he wanted to make it clear that Balkan Muslims are categorically different from other, specifically Middle Eastern, Muslims.

Even though I kept the criteria for inclusion in the study broad, and despite using innovative techniques to recruit participants and collect data, the study fell short of recruiting the initially targeted 30 participants. Recommendations for the "ideal" number of participants in qualitative studies range from 6 to 30 (Magnusson & Marecek, 2015). Instead of focusing on a number, however, most authors advise following the principle of "saturation" (Grbich, 2013) rather than sample size as an indication that there is no need for further recruitment. Hennink Bailey, and Hutter (2011) define saturation as "the point at which the information you collect begins to repeat itself" (p. 88). Having interviewed 17 participants, I determined that *most* stories had started to repeat themselves. Importantly, their accounts both complemented and reflected the results of the quantitative analysis. The fact that all three analyses were pointing in the same direction provided additional assurance of the validity of the study.

Profile of Participants

Most of my participants were women (11/17). In terms of ethnicity, most (11/17) were Albanians. All of my Bosnian participants were women, and all of my male participants were

Albanians. Six interviewees were born in Albania, six in Bosnia, and five in Kosovo. Four participants were of mixed Muslim and Christian origins.

The period of arrival of my participants reflects the 2011 NHS data (Table 8): all of my Bosnian participants arrived in Canada as refugees in the first half of the 1990s, during the war in Bosnia; the Kosovar participants arrived as refugees in 1999, during the war in Kosovo; the Albanian interviewees arrived in Canada in the 2000s and 2010s. All but two participants arrived in Canada when they were adults.

The age of the interviewees ranged from 25 to 63. Fourteen participants were over the age of 35, and three were in the 25–34 age group. All but one participant had at least a university degree. Seven interviewees live in Québec, and ten in Ontario.

The Interview Process

The interviews were conducted in person, or via telephone or the video chat application Skype. When a participant expressed interest in participating in the study, I offered to either come to where they lived—even if it was far from Ottawa, my place of residence—or to conduct the interview over the telephone or Skype.

Most of the participants not residing in Ottawa preferred to do the interview from their own homes rather than in a public place. Many in fact expressed relief that conducting the interview in person was not a requirement. On the one hand, Rubin and Rubin (2004) and Janesick (2010) caution that it might be difficult to engage in small talk and build rapport over the phone. However, Rubin and Rubin (Qualitative Interviewing : The Art of Hearing Data, 2004, p. 177) and Olson (2011) also cite several studies that compared face-to-face to telephone interviews and found no significant difference in the amount and quality of information shared. Lindlof and Taylor’s (2011) observations reflect my experience of telephone interviews:

> [They] can be as intimate and engrossing, and ultimately just as good at getting full responses, as an in-person interview. Phone interviews may even conjure up a “strangers passing in the night” phenomenon, in which participants feel freer to disclose personal information because they don’t expect to meet the researcher again. The absence of visual cues can also serve a useful purpose by reducing respondents’ reactions to the signs and body presentations of the interviewer or to the equipment used to record the interview. (p. 190)

Rubin and Rubin (2004) advise doing a “warm-up” call first and the interview on the second call. The first time a participant agreed to do an interview over the phone, I acted on their suggestion and chatted with the interviewee for over 45 minutes about subjects unrelated to the study, scheduling the actual interview for a later date. The participant, who worked as a supply teacher, found it difficult to schedule another time to meet—and in the end decided against participating further in the study because of family illness. In retrospect, I should have conducted the interview the first time we talked over the phone. The lesson I learned was to conduct the interviews as soon as the participant agreed, using whatever means possible. I also conducted interviews via Skype when this was the participant’s preference. The benefit of doing interviews over Skype was that I could see the participant while they could remain in the comfort of their own home.

All in all, I did not observe any major differences in the amount or quality of information obtained using these three different methods of data collection. In fact, those participants I spoke to in person in a public setting often looked uncomfortable and lowered their voice or whispered when they would talk about being Muslim, religion in general, racism, or terrorism. These are not topics typically discussed in public. The participants I talked to in person but in a private setting (office, after work), although often in a rush, seemed more at ease than those I talked to in a public setting; however, this was not always an option. The general recommendation I would give based on my experience conducting this study is that if it is not possible to conduct a person-to-person interview on a sensitive subject (terrorism, racism, stigma etc.) in a private

setting (home, office etc.), it is better to do so over the phone or a video chat than in a public setting (library, coffee shop etc.).

The interviews lasted on average about one hour. The shortest interview was about 45 minutes, and the longest almost two hours. They were conducted in Bosnian and/or English with participants from Bosnia and Kosovo, and in English with participants from Albania. Interestingly, the two Albanian participants I spoke to in Bosnian actually felt more comfortable speaking my mother tongue than English. The interviews conducted in Bosnian were transcribed and then translated into English. For the purpose of clarity, minor edits, marked with square brackets, were made to some quotations.

Although I used an interview guide (Appendix A), participants elaborated where they saw fit. I also modified and added questions regularly following an interview.

Validity

The objective of qualitative analysis is to bring “the richness, texture, and feeling of raw data,” rather than measurement and sampling (Neuman, 2007, p. 122). Qualitative researchers avoid distancing themselves from the phenomenon they study, and take advantage of “personal insights, feelings, and human perspectives to understand social life more fully” (Neuman, 2007, p. 126). In terms of validity of a qualitative study, however, Maxwell (2013) writes that researcher bias and reactivity present the greatest threats. He defines researcher bias as “the selection of data that fit the researcher’s existing theory, goals, or preconceptions and the selection of data that ‘stand-out’ to the researcher”; reactivity, on the other hand, is the “influence of the researcher on the setting or the individuals studied” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 124). While it is not possible to eliminate the researcher’s influence on participants, as “the informant is always influenced by the interviewer and the interview situation” (Ibid., p.125), I attempted to

reduce researcher bias and reactivity by not asking leading question, and by asking clear, open-ended, unambiguous questions (Seidman, 2006, p. 84).

Furthermore, Neuman (2007) writes that qualitative researcher's empirical claims are valid when supported by "numerous pieces of diverse empirical data," meaning that validity arises out of "the cumulative impact of hundreds of small, diverse details" that tied together create a "heavy weight of evidence" (p. 223, also Charmaz, 2001, p. 351; Maxwell, 2013, p. 126). Consequently, I provided rich data, numerous detailed quotes, and examples as another way of increasing the validity of a qualitative study. Neuman (2007) also notes that a qualitative researcher's "truth claims" need to be plausible, meaning that the raw data and the data's descriptions are not exclusive (p. 223). This study assures that descriptions of participants' accounts match the original quotations.

Maxwell (2013, p. 125) points to long-term involvement and repeated interviews as another way to increase the credibility of interpretations. While I offered participants the option of being interviewed more than once if they developed new insights after the interview was finished, none of the participants expressed interest in doing so.

Relationship with Participants and Reflexivity

On the one hand, my "insider status" as a Balkan immigrant studying other Balkan immigrants may have helped me recruit participants. As noted earlier, most of those who participated said they wanted to help out a fellow Balkan immigrant conducting a study. Being from the Balkans also facilitated "making legitimate knowledge claims" during the process of analysis and interpretation because I experienced the "material in some fashion" (Miller & Glassner, 2004, p. 132), for example, the questions of "Europeanness," "whiteness," and immigration in general. I

share the mother tongue of the Bosnian participants and, as mentioned earlier, I also spoke Bosnian with two participants from Kosovo.

On the other hand, my profile as a non-Muslim may have deterred some respondents from participating or from expressing their honest opinions or sentiments. The historical and political circumstances of former Yugoslavia may have made potential participants view me with suspicion. I am of Croatian (Roman Catholic) and Serbian (Orthodox Christian) ethnic descent. The Serbian "half" of my social identity in particular may have discouraged potential participants. While my name is ambiguous at first (it does not "sound" Serbian or Croatian, but it is clearly not Muslim), an internet search reveals that "Previsic" is an exclusively Croatian last name. Several Albanian participants asked me what my ethnic origin was, typically at the end of the interview. Their surprise at learning that I was half-Serbian indicated to me that they may have internet-searched my name. Croats are generally viewed with much less apprehension by Bosnian, and particularly Albanian Muslims. My spouse is a Canadian of Iranian Muslim origin and we have two children together. I would mention this to participants in order to signal that, even though I am not Muslim myself, my life is implicated in the question of what it feels like to be Muslim in Canada.

I was thus an "insider/outsider" in the research process. I was perceived as similar enough to many of my informants, but not the same. This, however, need not be an impediment. As Seidman (2006) writes, "Although the shared assumptions that come from common backgrounds may make it easier to build rapport, interviewing requires interviewers to have enough distance to enable them to ask real questions and to explore, not to share, assumptions" (p. 100). My lack of firm belonging to any ethnic or religious group placed me in a unique position from which I was be able to conveniently associate and dissociate myself from my

interviewees. My mixed ethnic and religious background—along with having a spouse who is Muslim and children who may or may not identify, or be identified, as Muslims as they grow up in Canada—destabilizes the perception of a firm belongingness to any ethnic or religious group and the associated biases stemming from it.

Data Analysis

The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded thematically, sorting participants' responses to each question into the appropriate category. As this is a qualitative study, inductive reasoning was employed to conduct the thematic analysis. Inductive approach emphasizes developing insights and generalizations from the data collected (Eid & Lagacé, 2007). This study employed several stages of coding, using the qualitative research software Nvivo. During the initial process of open coding, the data was read through, and themes and preliminary concepts were identified throughout the sample. The central purpose of open coding is to "open inquiry widely" (Berg, 2007, p. 261). During the second step that Berg (2007, p. 264) refers to as "the first sorting," I conducted more intense coding concerted around single categories. After deciding which categories were central, I began the final step of selective coding. Selective coding allows for all other subcategories to be linked with the main ones. If a section of text corresponded with more than one theme, it was coded into multiple categories. This strategy ensures that descriptions of complex issues take into account their interdependent nature. The chapter titles, headings and sub-headings largely reflect the coding scheme that was developed during the process of data analysis.

Following Neuman's (2007) note that qualitative researchers develop most of their concepts during data collection, I reflected on data, searched for patterns and developed categories during the data collection. Furthermore, the responses obtained from one participant

shaped the following data collection procedures (Charmaz, 2001, p. 336): as mentioned earlier, I added new, previously unasked questions to my interview guide. I used my computer, the comment function on my word processor, and also my smart phone to keep analytical memos, as ideas and thoughts would often come to me at most inopportune moments, mainly, interestingly, at playgrounds.

In order to guarantee anonymity and for confidentiality reasons, all participants have been given pseudonyms. I changed their professions and provided only approximate ages. Additionally, I left several quotes unattributed to a specific participant.

Chapter 5

Balkan Muslims in Canada: A Demographic Profile

The initial purpose of this chapter was to provide basic demographic information about Muslim immigrants in Canada using private microdata from the 2001 census and the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS). However, a comparison of the two censuses yielded an unexpected finding which provided an important indication of the boundary-making destigmatization strategies of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims: namely, an increase in irreligiosity. Also, the findings of the qualitative portion of the study prompted me to turn to Canada's 2013 General Social Survey (GSS) on Social Identity to "validate" participants' claim—and indeed their most significant boundary-making strategy—that their ethno-religious groups are in general indifferent towards religion, as well as their assertion that "other" Muslims' religiosity and the associated values might be "un-Canadian."

Muslims in Canada

In 2001, 576,205 Canadian residents identified as Muslim, thus representing 1.9% of all Canadian residents. Most (97.67%) identified as Muslim n.i.e.,[19] and the rest identified as Ahmadiyya, Ismaili, or Shiite (Table 1). The majority were immigrants—over three-quarters were born outside Canada, mostly in Asia and Africa. Of all Canadian Muslims, 26,435, or 4.77%, were born in Europe; and of those, 18,160, or 3.28% of all Canadian Muslims, were born in the Balkans.

[19] Not included elsewhere.

Table 1: Regions of birth of Canadian Muslims

Region of birth	Year	
	2001	2011
Canada	135,340	291,615
	24.42%	27.67%
Europe, outside the Balkans	8,275	13,400
	1.49%	1.27%
The Balkans	18,160	17,460
	3.28%	1.66%
Outside Canada and Europe	392,510	731,470
	70.81%	69.40%
Total	554,285	1,053,945
	100.00%	100.00%

In 2011, more than a million Canadian residents identified as Muslim (Table 1).[20] They represented 3.2% of all Canadian residents, an increase of 1.3% compared to 2001. While, like in 2001, most Muslims were immigrants, a decade later more than a quarter were Canadian-born, an increase of 3.25% compared to 2001. Most Muslim immigrants were born in Asia and Africa; and 30,860, or 2.93%, of all Canadian Muslims were born in Europe. Thus, in comparison to 2001, only 4,425 more Muslims identified as being born in Europe. Compared to 2001, there was an increase in the number of Muslims who were born in Europe, but not in the Balkans, and an overall decrease in the number of Balkan-born Muslims. While Balkan-born Muslims still made up the majority of Europe-born Muslims, they represented 56.58% of all European Muslims, compared to 68.70% in 2001.

[20] Information on specific Muslim denominations was not collected in 2011.

In both 2001 and 2011, more than 85% of Muslims identified as visible minority, while about 10% identified as white (Table 2). Most Muslims born in Europe, but outside the Balkans, also identified as “visible minorities” (Table 4). In contrast, in both 2001 and 2011 the vast majority of Muslims born in the Balkans identified as white (Table 5). A large majority—more than 90%—of Muslims born outside Canada and Europe identified as visible minorities.

Table 2: Canadian Muslims by visible minority status

	2001	2011
White	62,415	95,080
	10.84%	9.03%
Visible minority	491,250	917,800
	85.30%	87.17%
White and visible minority	22,230	40,020
	3.86%	3.80%
Total	575,895 100.00%	1,052,900 100.00%

Table 3: Visible minority status of Muslims born in Canada

White	2001	18,260
		13.521%
	2011	30,265
		10.41%
Visible minority	2001	108,965
		80.69%
	2011	243,215
		83.70%
White and visible minority	2001	7,820
		5.79%
	2011	17,115
		5.89%
Total	2001	135,045
		100.00%
	2011	290,595
		100.00%

Table 4: Visible minority status of Muslims born in Europe, outside the Balkans

White	2001	2,595
		31.38%
	2011	3,350
		25.00%
Visible minority	2001	5,155
		62.33%
	2011	9,035
		67.43%
White and visible minority	2001	520
		6.29%
	2011	1,015
		7.57%
Total	2001	8,270
		100.00%
	2011	13,400
		100.00%

Table 5: Visible minority status of Muslims born in the Balkans

White	2001	18,020
		99.23%
	2011	16,875
		96.65%
Visible minority	2001	75
		0.41%
	2011	475
		2.72%
White and visible minority	2001	65
		0.36%
	2011	110
		0.63%
Total	2001	18,160
		100.00%
	2011	17,460
		100.00%

Table 6: Visible minority status of Muslims born outside Canada and Europe

White	2001	22,780
		5.80%
	2011	44,590
		6.10%
Visible minority	2001	356,245
		90.76%
	2011	665,075
		90.93%
White and visible minority	2001	13,490
		3.44%
	2011	21,780
		2.98%
Total	2001	392,515
		100.00%
	2011	731,445
		100.00%

Balkan Immigrants in Canada

As argued in Chapter 3, the "Balkans" is as much as a political as a geographical entity. On the one hand, Croatia and Romania, geographically only partially on the Balkan Peninsula, are often included in the list (much to the chagrin of their inhabitants) largely because of their communist legacies. And yet, Greece, which is geographically entirely on the peninsula, is often excluded, again for political reasons: because it is the "cradle" of European civilization, has been member of the EU since 1981, and was not ruled by a communist regime during the Cold War.

I included the following as "Balkan" countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Romania for 2001; and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Romania for 2011.[21] In addition to the political reasons stated above, the immigration from these previously communist states followed a similar pattern, which Greece did not share.

In 2001, more than 215,000 people declared the Balkans as their region of birth (Table 7). Over two-thirds came from Romania and Yugoslavia. People born in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania made up 12% and 3%, respectively, of all people born in the Balkans. In 2011, there was an increase of more than 27,000 immigrants from the Balkans compared to 2001, with more than a third born in Romania. The number of immigrants from Albania more than doubled in one decade; in fact, the majority of Albanian immigrants came to Canada after 2001. While the data in Table 7 suggest that the number of immigrants born in Bosnia increased by 10,000 in one decade, statistics on the period of immigration of this group suggest otherwise.

Table 7: Countries of birth of immigrants from the Balkans

Country of birth	Year	
	2001	2011
Albania	6,285	14,060
	2.91%	5.77%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	26,205	36,460
	12.14%	14.96%
Macedonia	7,335	9,730
	3.40%	3.99%
Croatia	39,660	40,470
	18.37%	16.61%
Romania	61,380	83,860
	28.44%	34.41%
Bulgaria	9,565	17,815
	4.43%	7.31%
Yugoslavia	65,430	
	30.31%	
Serbia		33,025
		13.55%
Montenegro		1,590
		0.65%
Kosovo		6,665
		2.74%
Total	215,860	243,680
	100.00%	100.00%

Most immigrants from the Balkans came to Canada after 1991 (Table 8). There are, however, inter-country differences. For instance, most people born in Croatia and Macedonia immigrated to Canada before 1991; by contrast, in 2011, more than 60% of immigrants from Albania

[21] In 2001, Yugoslavia comprised two republics, Serbia, and Montenegro. In 2003, Yugoslavia was renamed “Serbia and Montenegro”; in 2006, “Serbia and Montenegro” split into two countries, Serbia, and Montenegro; in 2008 Kosovo separated from Serbia.

reported that they immigrated to Canada after the year 2000. More than 60% of immigrants from Kosovo came before 2000, with, in fact, more than half arriving between 1996 and 2000.

The difference in numbers between the 2001 and 2011 censuses (Table 7) suggests that about 10,000 people born in Bosnia and Herzegovina immigrated to Canada between 2001 and 2011. However, in the 2011 NHS, only 10%, or about 3,500, Bosnia-born immigrants declared they arrived in Canada between 2000 and 2011 (Table 8). This matches the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRRC) data, according to which more than 3,000 people born in Bosnia and Herzegovina immigrated to Canada between 2000 and 2011 (Table 9).

A large discrepancy in the numbers in the 2001 census and the 2011 NHS was not observed in the data for Albania-born immigrants (Table 8).[22] In the 2011 NHS, about 7,500 more people identified as being born in Albania, compared to the 2001 census. Similarly, in the 2011 NHS, more than 8,500 people born in Albania declared that they came to Canada between 2000 and 2011. The difference of about 1,000 is likely explained by the 2000–2001 overlap in the data.[23] Indeed, the IRCC data show that more than 1,500 people born in Albania came to Canada between 2000 and 2011 (Table 9). Finally, the IRCC data corroborate the 2001 census and 2011 NHS data—between 2000 and 2011, about 10,000 Albania-born persons immigrated to Canada.

---

[22] Comparative data for Kosovo, another country of interest, could not be obtained because Kosovo was part of Yugoslavia in 2001. A discrepancy was also observed in the data for the Romanian-born immigrants. However, this thesis is not concerned with Romanian immigrants. The data on this population are included for context only.

[23] There is an overlap of one year (2000-2001) in the data: the 2001 census covered the 1991-2001 period, while the 2011 census covers the 1991-2000 period.

Table 8: Period of immigration by country of birth

Country of birth	Year	Immigration period				Total (row)
		Before 1990	1991 - 2001[24]/1991 -2000[25]	2001- 2011[26]	Not a permanent resident	
Bulgaria	2001	1,870	7,240		430	9,540
		19.60%	75.89%		4.51%	100.00%
	2011	1,340	5,645	10,570	235	17,790
		7.5%	31.7%	59.4%	1.3%	100.0%
Romania	2001	24,995	35,175		1,160	61,330
		40.75%	57.35%		1.89%	100.00%
	2011	18,035	27,930	36,625	1,105	83,695
		21.55%	33.37%	43.76%	1.32%	100.00%
Albania	2001	340	4,940		985	6,265
		5.43%	78.85%		15.72%	
	2011	150	4,695	8,760	445	14,050
		1.07%	33.42%	62.35%	3.17%	100.00%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2001	3,035	22,630		525	26,190
		11.59%	86.41%		2.00%	100.00%
	2011	6,105	26,120	3,665	530	36,420
		16.76%	71.72%	10.06%	1.46%	100.00%
Croatia	2001	29,780	9,595		260	39,635
		75.14%	24.21%		0.66%	100.00%
	2011	28,160	9,835	2,015	405	40,415
		69.68%	24.34%	4.99%	1.00%	100.00%
Macedonia	2001	5,040	2,175		125	7,335
		68.71%	29.65%		1.70%	100.00%
	2011	4,965	2,030	2,615	110	9,720
		51.08%	20.88%	26.90%	1.13%	100.00%
Yugoslavia	2001	31,065	32,810		1,425	65,300
		47.57%	50.25%		2.18%	100.00%
Serbia	2011	13,490	13,710	5,395	390	32,985
		40.90%	41.56%	16.36%	1.18%	100.00%
Montenegro	2011	500	740	280	65	1,585

[24] 2001 census.
[25] 2011 census.
[26] 2011 census.

Country of birth	Year	Immigration period				Total (row)
		Before 1990	1991 - 2001[24]/1991 -2000[25]	2001-2011[26]	Not a permanent resident	
		31.55%	46.69%	17.67%	4.10%	100.00%
Kosovo	2011	125	3,750	2,550	205	6,630
		1.89%	56.56%	38.46%	3.09%	100.00%
Total	2001	96,120	114,560		4,915	215,595
		44.58%	53.14%		2.28%	100.00%
	2011	72,870	94,455	72,475	3,490	243,290
		29.95%	38.82%	29.79%	1.43%	100.00%

Table 9: Permanent residents by country of birth

Year	Country of birth	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Albania
1994	4,917	63
1995	6,265	59
1996	5,121	103
1997	3,834	268
1998	3,689	547
1999	2,808	1,222
2000	981	1,772
Total (1994-2000)	27,615	4,034
2001	871	1,612
2002	466	985
2003	265	819
2004	188	1,450
2005	211	1,223
2006	217	856
2007	209	702
2008	182	560
2009	156	715
2010	168	560
Total (2001-2010)	2,933	9,482

Year	Country of birth	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Albania
2011	140	539
2012	121	619
2013	119	603
2014	147	519
2015	195	574
Total (2011-2015)	722	2,854
TOTAL	31,270	16,370

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2004, 2011, 2014, 2015.

A significant data discrepancy exists between the 2001 census and the 2011 NHS for Bosnia-born immigrants: in 2001, only 3,000 people born in Bosnia said they immigrated to Canada before 1990, while in 2011, double the number reported they immigrated between during this time period. Also, in 2001, about 25,000 people said they came to Canada before 2001, while ten years later 7,000 more people indicated they arrived before year 2000. There is thus a 7,000-person difference in the two censuses in the number of Bosnia-born immigrants who came to Canada prior to 2000/2001. While the one-year overlap between 2000 and 2001 could explain a small portion of the difference, as argued earlier, a similar discrepancy was not observed among immigrants from Albania or most other countries. One possible explanation is that in the 2001 census, some Bosnia-born immigrants indicated Yugoslavia rather than Bosnia as their country of birth[27]—while Yugoslavia did indeed exist in 2001, it comprised only Serbia (including Kosovo) and Montenegro. In 2001, those born in Kosovo, for instance, had no choice but to

[27] I may be projecting personal experiences into this explanation. In the first years in Canada, I would often wonder if I should indicate the country that I was technically born in (Yugoslavia), or the present

indicate Yugoslavia as their country of birth. A question may be asked then, why a similar discrepancy was not observed among immigrants from Croatia and Macedonia, who were also, if born before 1991, technically born in Yugoslavia. It is plausible that, as Table 8 shows, the majority of Croatia and Macedonia-born immigrants arrived in Canada before 1991; these immigrants might have been more familiar with the Canadian census. In contrast, for many Bosnia-born residents who came to Canada after 1991, the 2001 census may have been the first Canadian census.

Immigrants born in Kosovo are also of interest for this study. As indicated earlier, Kosovo was still part of Yugoslavia in 2001 and there are no statistics pertaining to the number of Kosovo-born immigrants for that year. However, "Kosovar" was a response category in both the 2001 census and the 2011 NHS. As Table 10 shows, the number of people who identified as being of Kosovar ethnic origin almost doubled between 2001 and 2011 (Table 10).

Table 10: Frequency of Canadian residents of Balkan ethnic origins

Ethnic origin	Year	
	2001	2011
Albanian	13,420	25,110
	4.58%	6.74%
Kosovar	1,035	2,290
	0.35%	0.61%
Bosnian	13,755	18,300
	4.70%	4.91%
Yugoslav	38,005	22,415
	12.98%	6.01%
Macedonian	21,710	23,595
	7.41%	6.33%
Romanian	73,340	118,815

name of the country (Bosnia and Herzegovina). I do wonder if other immigrants born in countries that do not exist anymore (e.g. USSR) have faced similar dilemmas.

Ethnic origin	Year	
	2001	2011
	25.05%	31.87%
Bulgarian	10,420	22,125
	3.56%	5.94%
Croatian	73,550	76,165
	25.12%	20.43%
Serbian	47,120	62,770
	16.09%	16.84%
Montenegrin	460	1,205
	0.16%	0.32%
Total	292,815	372,790
	100.00%	100.00%

In both the 2001 census and the 2011 NHS, more people declared a Balkan ethnic origin than those who declared a Balkan country of birth. This is because not all people who declared a Balkan ethnic origin were born in the Balkans. Indeed, in both 2001 and 2011, more than a third of the people who declared a Balkan ethnic origin were born in Canada, while the rest were born outside Canada. People of Croatian, Macedonian, and Romanian ethnic origin had the highest numbers as Canadian-born; in comparison, in both 2001 and 2011, the vast majority (more than 80%) of those of Albanian, Bosnian, and Kosovar ethnic background were born outside Canada. In other words, people of Albanian, Bosnian, and Kosovar ethnic background are predominantly immigrants.

Table 11: Region of birth of Canadian residents by Balkan ethnic origins

Ethnic origin	Year	Region of birth		Total (row)
		Canada	Outside Canada	
Romanian	2001	25,765	47,570	73,335
		35.13%	64.87%	100.00%
	2011	41,700	77,110	118,810
		35.10%	64.90%	100.00%

Ethnic origin	Year	Region of birth		Total (row)
		Canada	Outside Canada	
Kosovar	2001	75	960	1,035
		7.25%	92.75%	100.00%
	2011	450	1,840	2,290
		19.65%	80.35%	100.00%
Albanian	2001	1,730	11,690	13,420
		12.89%	87.11%	100.00%
	2011	4,830	20,280	25,110
		19.24%	80.76%	100.00%
Bulgarian	2001	2,125	8,295	10,420
		20.39%	79.61%	100.00%
	2011	4,675	17,450	22,125
		21.13%	78.87%	100.00%
Croatian	2001	33,295	40,255	73,550
		45.27%	54.73%	100.00%
	2011	41,180	34,985	76,165
		54.07%	45.93%	100.00%
Macedonian	2001	11,235	10,475	21,710
		51.75%	48.25%	100.00%
	2011	12,105	11,490	23,595
		51.30%	48.70%	100.00%
Serbian	2001	10,900	36,220	47,120
		23.13%	76.87%	100.00%
	2011	19,275	43,495	62,770
		30.71%	69.29%	100.00%
Yugoslav	2001	16,660	21,340	38,000
		43.84%	56.16%	100.00%
	2011	11,815	10,600	22,415
		52.71%	47.29%	100.00%
Bosnian	2001	1,395	12,360	13,755
		10.14%	89.86%	100.00%
	2011	3,515	14,790	18,305
		19.20%	80.80%	100.00%
Montenegrin	2001	90	370	460
		19.57%	80.43%	100.00%
	2011	355	845	1,200
		29.58%	70.42%	100.00%
Total	2001	103,270	189,535	292,805

Ethnic origin	Year	Region of birth		Total (row)
		Canada	Outside Canada	
		35.27%	64.73%	100.00%
	2011	139,900	232,885	372,785
		37.53%	62.47%	100.00%

In 2001, more than 70% of Canadian residents born in the Balkans were Canadian citizens by naturalization, compared to 85% in 2011 (Table 12). More than 60% of those born in Bosnia and Herzegovina had Canadian citizenship in 2001, compared to more than 90% in 2011. In 2001, only 15% of immigrants born in Albania had Canadian citizenship, compared to more than 70% in 2011. In 2011, more than 75% of residents born in Kosovo had Canadian citizenship.

Table 12: Canadian citizenship of immigrants born in the Balkans

Country of birth	Year	Citizenship status		Total (row)
		Citizen by naturalization	Not a citizen	
Bulgaria	2001	5,255	4,285	9,540
		55.08%	44.92%	100.00%
	2011	13,220	4,600	17,820
		74.19%	25.81%	100.00%
Romania	2001	69,205	14,655	61,330
		71.07%	28.93%	100.00%
	2011	69,205	14,655	83,860
		82.52%	17.48%	100.00%
Albania	2001	995	5,275	6,265
		15.88%	84.20%	100.00%
	2011	10,460	3,595	14,055
		74.42%	25.58%	100.00%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2001	15,960	10,230	26,190
		60.94%	39.06%	100.00%
	2011	33,730	2,730	36,460
		92.51%	7.49%	100.00%
Croatia	2001	37,950	2,520	40,470

Country of birth	Year	Citizenship status		Total (row)
		Citizen by naturalization	Not a citizen	
		84.31%	15.69%	100.00%
	2011	37,950	2,520	40,470
		93.77%	6.23%	100.00%
Macedonia	2001	5,785	1,550	7,335
		78.87%	21.13%	100.00%
	2011	8,455	1,275	9,730
		86.90%	13.10%	100.00%
Yugoslavia	2001	47,905	17,395	65,300
		73.36%	26.64%	100.00%
Serbia	2011	29,440	3,590	33,030
		89.13%	10.87%	100.00%
Montenegro	2011	1,370	220	1,590
		86.16%	13.84%	100.00%
Kosovo	2011	5,110	1,555	6,665
		76.67%	23.33%	100.00%
Total	2001	152,905	62,690	215,595
		70.92%	29.08%	100.00%
	2011	208,940	34,740	243,680
		85.74%	14.26%	100.00%

The data on first ethnic origin and place of birth corresponds to the data on citizenship by birth: in 2001, 12%, 10%, and 7% of those of Albanian, Bosnian, and Kosovar ethnic origin, respectively, had Canadian citizenship by birth (Table 11).

Religion of Canadians from the Balkans

In both 2001 and 2011, the majority of immigrants born in the Balkans reported being Orthodox Christian or Roman Catholic (Table 13). Between 2001 and 2011, the number and percentage of Muslims and Catholics decreased, and the number and percentage of Orthodox Christians increased. What stands out in particular is the number of those who identified as having no

religion—this population increased by 5% and almost doubled in size in one decade, representing almost 13% of all Canadians born in the Balkans.

Table 13: Religious denomination of immigrants born in the Balkans

Religion	Year	
	2001	2011
Muslim	18,160	17,460
	8.41%	7.17%
Orthodox Christian	93,165	116,100
	43.16%	47.65%
Roman Catholic	62,030	52,980
	28.74%	21.74%
No religion	16,855	31,470
	7.81%	12.91%
Total	190,205	218,010
	88.11%	89.46%
Other	25,655	25665
	11.89%	10.53%
Total	215,860	243,675
	100.00%	100.00%

In 2001, more than 90% of those who were born in the Balkans and identified as Muslim came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Yugoslavia, and Albania (Table 14); this is similar to 2011, when more than 80% of people who were born in the Balkans and identified as Muslim came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (which in 2001 was part of Yugoslavia), and Albania.

Table 14: Countries of birth of Muslims born in the Balkans

Country of birth	Year	
	2001	2011
Bulgaria	530	390
	2.92%	2.23%
Romania	220	410
	1.21%	2.35%
Albania	2,120	2,325

Country of birth	Year	
	2001	2011
	11.67%	13.32%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7,895	7,025
	43.47%	40.23%
Croatia	205	380
	1.13%	2.18%
Macedonia, Republic of	690	1,205
	3.80%	6.90%
Serbia		285
		1.63%
Montenegro		335
		1.92%
Kosovo		5,105
		29.24%
Yugoslavia	6,500	
	35.79%	
Total	18,160	17,460
	100.00%	100.00%

Bosnian and Albanian Muslims in 2001 and 2011

In 2001, of the Canadian residents who were born in Bosnia and Herzegovina, more identified as Muslim than Orthodox Christian or Catholic (Table 15); a decade later, the percentage of Canadian residents who were born in Bosnia and Herzegovina who identified as Orthodox Christian increased by almost 11% (more than 6,500), while the actual number of Muslims somewhat decreased and the percentage dropped by almost 12%. The percentage of those who indicated “no religion” also increased slightly, from 15% to 20%. In comparison, in the 2013 population census in Bosnia and Herzegovina, more than half of the population identified as Muslim and only about 3% as atheist, agnostic, other, or not declared (Table 24). The other two major religious denominations had comparable representations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Canada—about 30.75% versus 35.65% identified as Orthodox Christian in the Bosnian and

Canadian censuses, respectively, and about 15% versus 19.75% as Catholics in the Bosnian and Canadian censuses, respectively (Table 15, Table 24).

A possible explanation for the decline in the percentage of Bosnian Muslims is that between 2001 and 2011 Muslim immigration from Bosnia all but ceased, and immigration of Orthodox Christians and people who followed "no religion" increased. At first glance, it appears as if this might be the case: the number and percentage of people who identified as Orthodox Christian did indeed increase by more than 6,500 between 2001 and 2011. And yet, as noted earlier, according to both the 2011 NHS (Table 15) and IRCC data (Table 9), only about 3,000 Bosnia-born immigrants of *all* religious denomination came to Canada during that time period. Also, as Table 16 shows, an almost equal number of Muslims and Orthodox Christians (about 1,200) and only about 450 Catholics and the same number of persons who follow no religion arrived in Canada after 2001. Overall, it appears that Orthodox Christian and non-religious immigration from Bosnia and Herzegovina did not increase at the expense of Muslim immigration.[28] On the contrary, Orthodox and Muslim immigration seems to have increased at the expense of Catholic[29] and non-religious immigration. Other unidentified factors notwithstanding (e.g. return to Bosnia, immigration to other countries etc., although it is unclear why these would only apply to Bosnia-born Muslims, and not Catholics or Orthodox Christians

---

[28] This is in keeping with the earlier hypothesis regarding the discrepancy in the numbers of Bosnia-born immigrants in the 2001 census and 2011 NHS, as well as the seemingly drastic rise in the Orthodox Christian Bosnia-born population. I postulated that about 7,000 Bosnia-born immigrants, particularly Bosnian Serbs who are predominantly Orthodox Christians, indicated as their countries of birth Yugoslavia, in 2001, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 2011, when Yugoslavia was not an option anymore.
[29] Immigration from Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia to Canada generally decreased in the last 15 years, with Balkan residents preferring to work in or migrate to Western European countries. This may be more pronounced among Croats. As noted earlier, most Bosnian Catholics are Croatian Catholics and most have Croatian citizenship. As such, many Bosnian Croats either migrate to or travel back and forth from

born in Bosnia), the lower number and percentage of Muslims born in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 2011 NHS compared to the 2001 are possibly the result of about 2,000 (or more than a quarter) of those who in 2001 identified as Muslim choosing the "no religion" response a decade later. It is important to note, again, that the modest numerical and significant percental decrease was observed only in the Muslim category in comparisons of the two Canadian censuses, as well as the most recent Canadian and Bosnian censuses.

Table 15: Religious denomination of immigrants born in the Balkans

Country of birth	Year	Religion					Total (row)
		Roman Catholic	Orthodox Christian	Muslim	No religion	Other	
Bulgaria	2001	315	6,000	530	950	1,770	9,565
		3.29%	62.73%	5.54%	9.93%	18.50%	100.00%
	2011	480	11,770	390	3,080	2,095	17,815
		2.69%	66.07%	2.19%	17.29%	11.76%	100.00%
Romania	2001	9,705	33,320	220	2,900	15,235	61,380
		15.81%	54.28%	0.36%	4.72%	24.82%	100.00%
	2011	10,415	51,050	410	6,445	15,540	83,860
		12.42%	60.88%	0.49%	7.69%	18.53%	100.00%
Albania	2001	1,025	1,740	2,120	1,035	365	6,285
		16.31%	27.68%	33.73%	16.47%	5.81%	100.00%
	2011	2,560	3,125	2,325	5,035	1,015	14,060
		18.21%	22.23%	16.54%	35.81%	7.22%	100.00%
Bosnia	2001	6,970	6,540	7,895	3,930	870	26,205
		26.60%	24.96%	30.13%	15.00%	3.32%	100.00%
	2011	7,210	12,995	7,025	7,475	1,750	36,455
		19.78%	35.65%	19.27%	20.50%	4.80%	100.00%
Croatia	2001	31,765	4,235	205	2,150	1,310	39,660
		80.09%	10.68%	0.52%	5.42%	3.30%	100.00%
	2011	26,975	7,755	380	3,390	1,970	40,470
		66.65%	19.16%	0.94%	8.38%	4.87%	100.00%
Macedonia	2001	120	6,125	690	205	195	7,335
		1.64%	83.50%	9.41%	2.79%	2.66%	100.00%

Croatia to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also, Croatian citizens had been allowed to legally work in many countries of the European Union even before Croatia officially became an EU member in 2013.

Country of birth	Year	Religion					Total (row)
		Roman Catholic	Orthodox Christian	Muslim	No religion	Other	
	2011	110	7,635	1,205	525	255	9,730
		1.13%	78.47%	12.38%	5.40%	2.62%	100.00%
Yugoslavia	2001	12,125	35,210	6,500	5,680	5,915	65,430
		18.53%	53.81%	9.93%	8.68%	9.04%	100.00%
Serbia	2011	4,825	20,775	285	4,260	2,885	33,030
		14.61%	62.90%	0.86%	12.90%	8.73%	100.00%
Montenegro	2011	115	950	335	160	30	1,590
		7.23%	59.75%	21.07%	10.06%	1.89%	100.00%
Kosovo	2011	285	45	5,105	1,100	130	6,665
Total	2001	62,025	93,165	18,160	16,855	25,655	215,860
		28.73%	43.16%	8.41%	7.81%	11.89%	100.00%
	2011	52,975	116,100	17,460	31,470	25,670	243,675
		21.74%	47.65%	7.17%	12.91%	10.53%	100.00%

Table 16: Period of immigration by religious denomination of immigrants born in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Religion	Period of immigration				Total (row)
	Before 1991	1991-2000	2001-2011	Non-permanent residents	
Catholic	2,465	4,120	490	115	7,190
	44.33%	16.30%	14.33%	28.05%	0.00%
Christian Orthodox	1,670	9,945	1,265	100	12,981
	30.04%	39.35%	36.99%	24.39%	0.00%
Muslim	590	5,080	1,215	140	7,026
	10.61%	20.10%	35.53%	34.15%	0.00%
No religious affiliation	835	6,130	450	55	7,471
	15.02%	24.25%	13.16%	13.41%	0.00%
Total	5,560	25,275	3,420	410	34,665
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	

Source: 2011 NHS

Examining the ethnic origins of Bosnia-born immigrants provides further clues. In both 2001 and 2011, most Balkan-born immigrants declared a first ethnic origin that was coterminous with their country of origin. For instance, in the 2011 NHS, more than 90% of those born in Bulgaria

identified their first ethnic background as Bulgarian and over 97% of those born in Albania identified as Albanian (Statistics Canada 2011). In contrast, among Bosnia-born Canadian residents, no ethnic origin represented a majority response (Table 19). Bosniak ethnic origin was also not offered as a response category.

Table 17: First ethnic origin of immigrants born in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ethnic origin	Year	
	2001	2011
Bosnian	10,920	13,520
	41.67%	37.08%
Croatian	5,240	4,525
	20.00%	12.41%
Serbian	4,935	11,060
	18.83%	30.33%
Yugoslavian n.o.s.[30]	2,760	4,360
	10.53%	11.96%
Other	2,350	2,995
	8.97%	8.21%
Total	26,205	36,460
	100.00%	100.00%

While it is difficult to correctly predict the likely ethnic or religious origin of someone born in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on this information only, knowing their ethnic origin is an indication of their religious background. In both 2001 and 2011, those who identified their ethnic origin as Bosnian (most are immigrants) were more likely to also identify as Muslim or as following no religion, than to identify as Catholic or Orthodox Christian. In 2001, 57% of those who identified as Bosnian identified as Muslim, while 16% identified as having no religion (Table 18). A decade later, the percentage of those who identified as Bosnian and Muslim

dropped by 10%, while the percentage of those who identified as Bosnian and having no religion rose by the same percentage. The percentages of those who identified as Bosnian and Catholic or Orthodox Christian remained relatively stable. This is an additional indication that some Bosnia-born immigrants who identified as Muslim in 2001 identified as following "no religion" in 2011.

Table 18: Religious denomination of Canadian residents of Bosnian ethnic origin

Religion	Year	
	2001	2011
Roman Catholic	1,510	2,035
	10.33%	11.12%
Christian Orthodox	1,055	2,005
	7.22%	10.96%
Muslim, n.i.e.	8,340	8,645
	57.05%	47.24%
No Religion	2,345	4,850
	16.04%	26.50%
Other	1,370	765
	9.37%	4.18%
Total	14,620	18,300
	100.00%	100.00%

The data on Canadian residents born in Albania also point in the direction of immigrants of Muslim background changing their religious identification and/or choosing to identify as following no religion (Table 19).

Table 19: Religious denominations of immigrants born in Albania

Country of birth	Year	Religion					Total
		Roman Catholic	Orthodox Christian	Muslim	No religion	Other	
Albania	2001	1,025	1,740	2,120	1,035	365	6,285
		16.31%	27.68%	33.73%	16.47%	5.81%	100.00%

[30] Not otherwise specified.

2011	2,560	3,125	2,325	5,035	1,015	14,060
	18.21%	22.23%	16.54%	35.81%	7.22%	100.00%

Table 19 illustrates that the percentage of Albania-born immigrants who identified as Orthodox Christian and Catholics changed significantly between 2001 and 2011; by contrast, the number of Muslims increased by only about 200, and the percentage Muslims decreased by 17%. The number of those who identified as having no religion increased by 4,000, or 19%, in one decade. At first glance, it would appear as if Muslim immigration from Albania all but ceased after 2001, and immigration of those who follow no religion increased. However, as Table 20 below shows, 1,760 Albania-born immigrants who arrived in Canada after the year 2000 identified as Muslim.

Table 20: Period of immigration by religious denomination of immigrants born in Albania

Religion	Period of immigration				Total (row)
	Before 1991	1991-2000	2001-2011	Non-permanent residents	
Catholic	45	750	1,610	155	2,560
	31.03%	17.50%	19.62%	36.90%	19.61%
Christian Orthodox	30	1,300	1,745	50	3,125
	20.69%	30.34%	21.27%	11.90%	23.94%
Muslim	40	420	1,760	110	2,330
	27.59%	9.80%	21.45%	26.19%	17.85%
No religious affiliation	30	1,815	3,090	105	5,040
	20.69%	42.36%	37.66%	25.00%	38.61%
Total	145	4,285	8,205	420	13,055
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: 2011 NHS

Unlike Bosnia-born immigrants, more than 60% of Albania-born immigrants arrived in Canada in the 2000s (Table 12). Of those, more than a third identified as following “no religion” and only a fifth as Muslim (Table 20). This in part explains the rise in the “no religion” category. It is however unclear why almost 38% of Albania-born immigrants who arrived in the 2000s

identified as having no religion, and only 21.5% as Muslim, especially if we know that in the 2011 census in Albania, almost 60% of the population identified as Muslim, and only about 5% as "believers without religious denomination" (Table 24).

Table 20 also tells us that in the 2011 NHS, only 460 Albania-born immigrants who identified as Muslim declared that they came to Canada in or before 2000. However, Table 19 tells us that in the 2001 census, 2,120 Albania-born immigrants identified as Muslims. Unless there are other factors that contributed to the decline in the category (e.g. return to Albania, immigration to other countries etc.—although, again, it is unclear why this would only apply to Albania-born Muslims, and not Catholics or Orthodox Christians), it is possible that at least 1,500, or about two-thirds, of Albania-born immigrants who identified as Muslim in 2001 later identified as following "no religion" in 2011, thus contributing to the percental increase in this category.

Unlike Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is both ethnically and religiously diverse, Albania is religiously but not ethnically diverse. In other words, most people who were born in Albania identified their first ethnic origin as Albanian regardless of their religious background. Additionally, almost 70% of those born in Kosovo also identified their ethnic origin as Albanian (Table 22). Unsurprisingly, then, there is religious diversity in the Albanian ethnic origin category. In 2001, almost 58% of those who identified their first ethnic origin as Albanian (almost 13% were Canadian-born, Table 11) identified as Muslim and only 12% as having "no religion" (Table 21). Ten years later, there was a 23% decrease in the "Muslim" and a 17% increase in the "no religion" response categories. Other categories remained relatively stable.

Table 21: Religious denomination of Canadian residents of Albanian ethnic origin

Religion	Year	
	2001	2011

Religion	Year	
	2001	2011
Catholic	1,615	3,820
	12.03%	15.21%
Orthodox Christian	1,675	3,540
	12.48%	14.10%
Muslim	7,755	8,690
	57.77%	34.61%
No Religion	1,695	7,655
	12.63%	30.49%
Other, n.i.e.	685	1,405
	5.10%	5.60%
Total	13,425	25,110
	100.00%	100.00%

Finally, the data for those born in Kosovo point in the same direction. Kosovo is religiously homogenous: in the 2011 census in Kosovo, more than 95% of the Kosovo population identified as Muslim. In Canada, while there is some ethnic diversity among those born in Kosovo (Table 22), Kosovars also identify primarily as Muslims (Table 23).

Table 22: First ethnic origin of immigrants born in Kosovo

Ethnic origin	Frequency
Albanian	4,575
	68.64%
Kosovar	1,705
	25.58%
Serbian	45
	0.68%
Other	340
	5.10%
Total	6,665
	100.00%

Kosovo was still part of Yugoslavia in 2001 and there is no information on how immigrants born in Kosovo identified in terms of religion. We do know, however, that in both 2001 and 2011, more than 80% of those who identified as Kosovar (of whom more than 90% are immigrants, Table 11) also identified as Muslim (Table 23). Data from the 2011 NHS show a decline of almost 6% in the Muslim category and an increase of 6% in the "no religion" category. Given the relative religious homogeneity of Albanians from Kosovo, this change, albeit small, is likely attributable to a change in religious identification.

Table 23: Religion of Canadian residents of Kosovar ethnic origin

Religion	Year	Frequency
Orthodox Christian or Catholic	2001	40
		3.86%
Orthodox Christian	2011	0
		0.00%
Catholic	2011	85
		3.77%
Muslim	2001	890
		85.99%
	2011	1,805
		80.04%
No religion	2001	105
		10.14%
	2011	365
		16.19%
Total	2001	1,035
		100.00%
	2011	2,255
		100.00%

Note: For the 2001 census, the categories of Catholic and Orthodox Christian were combined because they had counts smaller than five.

I also compared the 2011 NHS with the latest population censuses conducted in Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. While in all three countries Muslims represent the majority, in the 2011 NHS, Muslims represent the majority only among those born in Kosovo, and to a much smaller extent than in Kosovo itself (Table 24). Given that Canada selects immigrants based on their educational and professional credentials and their age, religious composition of immigrant populations does not need to reflect those of their home countries. For instance, it appears that, percentally, there are significantly more Albania-born Orthodox Christians in Canada than in Albania. It is nevertheless informative to do a comparison, particularly if it includes more than one immigrant community and home country and if, as is the case here, the cross-country comparisons point in the same direction: that is, significantly fewer people identifying as Muslim and many more as having no religion in immigration than in home country-contexts, with the percentage of Catholics and Orthodox Christians (with the exception of Albania) remaining relatively similar.

Is it possible that disidentification from the Muslim category may have been the primary destigmatization strategy of Balkan Muslim immigrants in Canada? As the qualitative findings will show, one thing that most of the participants agree on is that Albanian and Bosnian Muslims are generally indifferent towards religion, compared to “other” Muslims. Before I delve into the interview findings, I turn to Canada’s GSS on Social Identity to test these claims. The following section examines the religiosity of Canadian Muslims in general, and compares the religiosity of Balkan Muslims to Muslims immigrants born outside the Balkans.

Also, as noted earlier, Muslims in Canada and the West in general are often perceived by mainstream society as being at odds with Canadian and Western values such as democracy and freedom. As the chapters detailing the results of the qualitative analysis will show, Muslims from

the Balkans also tend to perceive “non-European” Muslims as strict in terms of religion and hence more likely to espouse illiberal values. The following section looks at the level of pride that Canadian Muslims take in their Canadian identity, Canada’s democracy, and Canada’s national symbols, namely the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Table 24: A comparison of the 2011 NHS with the most recent population censuses in Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia

2011 Albania Census	Muslim	Orthodox	Catholic	Believers without religious denomination	Atheists	Prefer not to answer	Not stated		Total
	58.80%	6.75%	10.03%	5.50%	2.40%	13.80%	2.40%		99.68%
2011 NHS–Albania-Born Immigrants	Muslim	Orthodox Christian	Catholic	No religion	Other				Total
	16.54%	22.23%	18.21%	35.81%	7.22%				100.01%
2011 Kosovo Census	Muslim	Orthodox Christian	Catholic	None	Other	Unspecified			Total
	95.60%	1.50%	2.20%	0.07%	0.07%	0.6%			99.44%
2011 NHS–Kosovo-Born Immigrants	Muslim	Orthodox Christian	Catholic	No religion	Other				
	76.59%	0.68%	4.28%	16.50%	1.95%				100.00%
2013 Bosnia Census	Muslim	Orthodox	Catholic	Atheist	Agnostic	Other	Not declared	No answer	Total
	50.70%	30.75%	15.19%	0.79%	0.31%	1.15%	0.93%	0.19%	100.01%
2011 NHS–Bosnia-Born Immigrants	Muslim	Orthodox	Catholic	No religion	Other				Total
	19.27%	35.65%	19.78%	20.50%	4.80%				100.00%

Sources: open.data.al, 2011; Central Intelligence Agency, 2017; Popis 2013, 2017.

Religiosity and Canadian Identity of Canadian Muslims

Statistics Canada has been conducting GSSs since 1985. All GSSs include the question of religion and degree of religiosity. GSS 27, administered in 2013, examined the issues of social identity (e.g. the importance of national symbols), perceptions of shared values, and pride in being Canadian. It is thus suitable for an examination of the relationship between religiosity and pride in, and the importance of, Canada's national symbols. I used the survey to obtain statistics pertaining to all Canadian Muslims, as well as to compare Balkan-born immigrants to those born outside the Balkans. I looked at how these communities responded to the questions of religiosity and spirituality, degree of pride in being Canadian and Canadian democracy, and the importance of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The analysis revealed differences between Muslims born in and outside the Balkans in terms of religiosity, but not with regard to pride and the importance of Canadian identity and national symbols.

Religiosity of Canadian Muslims

I started the examination of religiosity with the following question from the survey: "How important are your religious or spiritual beliefs to the way you live your life? Would you say they are...?." As Table 25 shows, almost 90% of all Canadian Muslims think that religious or spiritual beliefs are important to them.

Table 25: Importance of religious or spiritual beliefs to Canadian Muslims

Importance	Frequency
Very important	515,060
	64.28%
Somewhat important	199,365
	24.88%
Not very important	54,825
	6.84%

Importance	Frequency
Not at all important	32,030
	4.00%
Total	801,280
	100.00%

Next, I compared the responses of Muslims born in the Balkans to Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans. Responses "not very important" or "not at all important" were combined into "Not very or not at all important" because of a small unweighted cell count in the "Born in the Balkans" category. As Table 26 shows, there were differences between Muslims born in the Balkans and Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans in all the response categories. Balkan Muslims were more likely to not give importance to religious or spiritual beliefs.

Table 26: Importance of religious or spiritual beliefs of Canadian Muslim immigrants, by region of birth

Importance	Region of birth	
	The Balkans	Outside the Balkans
Very important	1,540a	466,460b
	14.24%	63.95%
Somewhat important	4,420a	185,760b
	40.87%	25.47%
Not very or not at all important	4,855a	77,180b
	44.89%	10.58%
Total	10,815	729,400
	100.0%	100.0%

Note: Each subscript letter denotes a subset of the two categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.
Pearson Chi-Square = 16474.922a

Next, I looked at the responses to the following question: "Not counting events such as weddings or funerals, during the past 12 months, how often did you participate in religious activities or attend religious services or meetings?" As Table 27 shows, almost one half of all Muslims in the

survey indicated that they “participate in religious activities or attend religious services or meetings” at least once a month, and a third chose the “not at all” response.

Table 27: Religious participation of Canadian Muslims

Participation	Frequency
At least once a week	221,480 27.58%
At least once a month	140,915 17.55%
At least 3 times a year	68,485 8.53%
Once or twice a year	102,560 12.77%
Not at all	269,705 33.58%
Total	803,145 100.00%

I then compared Muslims born in the Balkans to Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans (Table 28). Because of the presence of a small unweighted cell count in the “Born in the Balkans” category, I combined the categories “At least once a week,” “At least once a month,” “At least three times a year,” and “Once or twice a year” into “At least once or twice a year.” Again, differences were found between these two categories, albeit not to the extent of difference in the responses to the question about the importance of religious or spiritual beliefs. The collapsing of the three responses categories led to some loss of precision; the difference between recoded categories should thus be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, the finding that Muslims born in the Balkans were more likely than Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans to say that they do not “participate in religious activities or attend religious services or meetings” at all is of note.

Table 28: Religious participation of Canadian Muslim Immigrants, by region of birth

Participation	Region of birth	
	The Balkans	Outside the Balkans
At least once or twice a year	6,280$_a$	476,935$_b$
	58.04%	65.22%
Not at all	4,540$_a$	25,4330$_b$
	41.96%	34.78%
Total	10,820	731,265
	100.00%	100.00%

Note: Each subscript letter denotes a subset of the two categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level.
Pearson Chi-Square = 242.846

Finally, I looked at the responses to the following question: "In the past 12 months, how often did you engage in religious or spiritual activities on your own, including prayer, meditation and other forms of worship taking place at home or in any other location?" As

Table 29 shows, most Canadian Muslims regularly engage in these forms of religious or spiritual activities.

Table 29: Religious participation of Canadian Muslims, on one's own

Participation	Frequency
At least once a day	403,840
	61.76%
At least once a week	132,695
	20.29%
At least once a month	58,850
	9.00%
At least 3 times a year	14,775
	2.26%
Once or twice a year	43,705
	6.68%
Total	653,865
	100.00%

Next, I compared Muslims born in the Balkans to Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans. Because of the presence of a small unweighted cell count in the "Born in the Balkans" category, I combined the responses "At least once a day," "At least once a week," "At least once a month," "At least three times a year," and "Once or twice a year" into "At least once or twice a year." Differences were found between these two populations. While the collapsing of the three response categories led to some loss of precision and the difference between recoded categories should be interpreted with caution, of note is the finding that Muslims born in the Balkans were more likely than Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans to say that they do not "engage in religious or spiritual activities on your own" at all, the only response that was not recoded (Table 30).

Table 30: Religious participation of Canadian Muslim immigrants, on one's own, by region of birth

Participation	Region of birth	
	The Balkans	Outside the Balkans
At least once or twice a year	4,775a	594,335b
	45.56%	81.62%
Not at all	5,705a	133,800b
	54.44%	18.38%
Total	10,480	728,135
	100.00%	100.00%

Note: Each subscript letter denotes a subset of the two categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level
Pearson Chi-Square = 8772.999a

Canadian Identity of Canadian Muslims

I also examined Canadian Muslims' responses to the questions pertaining to Canadian identity. As Table 31 displays, more than 80% of all Muslims who are Canadian citizens indicated they were proud to be Canadian.

Table 31: Pride in being Canadian among Muslims

Degree of pride	Frequency
Very proud	501,169 62.12%
Proud	152,375 18.89%
Somewhat proud	16,679 2.07%
Not very proud	10,657 1.32%
No opinion	5,410 0.67%
Not a Canadian citizen	120,433 14.93%
Total	806,723 100.00%

Next, I compared Muslims born in the Balkans to Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans,[31] and found differences only in the degree to which these groups are proud to be Canadian. While Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans were more likely to indicate that they were very proud to be Canadian, Muslims born in the Balkans were more likely to be proud or somewhat proud. Both groups thus overall expressed unequivocal pride in their Canadian identity (Table 32).

Table 32: Pride in being Canadian among Muslim immigrants, by region of birth

Degree of pride	Region of birth

[31] Because of a small unweighted cell count in the "Born in the Balkans" category, responses "Proud" and "Somewhat proud" were combined into "Proud or somewhat proud," while categories "Not very proud" and "Not proud at all" were recoded as missing due to small counts even after combining response categories.

	The Balkans	Outside the Balkans
Very proud	6,990a	456,355b
	66.16%	75.74%
Proud or somewhat proud	3,575a	146,150b
	33.8%	24.3%
Total	10,565	602,505
	100.0%	100.0%

Each subscript letter denotes a subset of the two categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level
Pearson Chi-Square = 516.535

As Table 38 shows, almost 90% of Canadian Muslims indicated that they are at least somewhat "proud of Canada in . . . the way democracy works."

Table 33: Pride in Canada's democracy among Muslims

Degree of pride	Frequency
Very proud	329,920
	40.90%
Proud	303,180
	37.58%
Somewhat proud	83,185
	10.31%
Not very proud	36,465
	4.52%
Not proud at all	12,815
	1.59%
No opinion	38,075
	4.72%
Don't know	3,090
	0.38%
Total	806,730
	100.00%

Next, I compared Muslims born in the Balkans to Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans.[32] Again, differences were found only in the degree to which Muslims born in the Balkans and Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans were proud of Canada's democracy. Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans were more likely to be very proud, and Muslims born in the Balkans proud or somewhat proud of Canada's democracy (Table 34).

Table 34: Pride in Canadian democracy among Muslim immigrants, by region of birth

Degree of pride	Region of birth	
	The Balkans	Outside the Balkans
Very proud	3,170a	312,145b
	29.30%	48.31%
Proud or somewhat proud	7,650a	333,950b
	70.70%	51.69%
Total	10,820	646,095
	100.0%	100.0%

Note: Each subscript letter denotes a subset of the two categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level
Pearson Chi-Square = 1542.519

Finally, I examined the responses to the following question: "When you think of Canadian identity, how important is the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms?" Almost 99% of all Muslims indicated that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is very or somewhat important to them (Table 35).

Table 35: Importance of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms among Muslims

Degree of importance	Frequency

[32] Because of the presence of unweighted cell counts smaller than five in the "Born in the Balkans" category, responses "Proud" and "Somewhat proud" were combined into "Proud or somewhat proud," while categories "Not very proud" and "Not proud at all" were recoded as missing due to small counts even after combining.

Very important	667,375
	86.34%
Somewhat important	97,360
	12.60%
Not very or not at all important	8,210
	1.06%
Total	772,945 100.00%

I then compared Muslims born in the Balkans to Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans. Because of a small unweighted cell count in the "Born in the Balkans" category, I combined the responses "Very important" and "Somewhat important" into "Very or somewhat important," and combined "Not very important" and "Not at all important" into "Not very or not at all important." Again, differences were found only in the degree to which Muslims born in the Balkans and Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans thought the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is important (Table 36).

Table 36: Importance of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms among Muslim immigrants, by region of birth

Degree of importance	Region of birth	
	The Balkans	Outside the Balkans
Very or somewhat important	10,820a	695,990b
	100.00%	99.28%
Not very or not at all important	0a	5,075b
	0.00%	0.72%
Total	10,820	701,065
	100.00%	100.00%

Note: Each subscript letter denotes a subset of the two categories whose column proportions do not differ significantly from each other at the .05 level
Pearson Chi-Square = 78.896

Conclusion

This chapter provided a demographic profile of Muslim Canadians born in the Balkans. It showed that the vast majority come from Bosnia, Albania, and Kosovo. They also are Canada's most recent immigrants: most Bosnian and Kosovar Muslims arrived in Canada in the 1990s, while most Albanian Muslims immigrated in the 2000s.

In 2011, the Canadian Muslim population increased by 1.3% compared to 2001. Canada remains predominantly Christian, with more than two-thirds of Canadians identifying as such in in 2011. At the same time, Canadians who follow no religion represent the second largest group: in 2011, almost a quarter of Canadians identified as having no religion, up from 16% in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2016b). Immigrants from the Balkans in general seem to follow this trend. This appears to be particularly pronounced among immigrants from Albania, and to some extent Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

A comparison of the 2001 census and the 2011 NHS shows, however, that the move towards irreligiosity has occurred mostly at the expense of Muslim identification. This was particularly pronounced among immigrants born in Albania and those who identified their first ethnic origin as Albanian. It appears that a significant number of those born in Bosnia, Albania, and Kosovo who identified as Muslim in 2001 identified as following no religion a decade later. In comparison, small percentages of respondents in the most recent population censuses in Albania, Bosnia, and Kosovo reported not belonging to any religious denominations. As will be argued later, in the home country contexts, religion and ethnicity are coterminous—the vast majority of Muslims are part of the same ethnic group, with shared histories and religious

contexts. In contrast, in Canada the category is shared with other ethnic groups and invested with meanings starkly different from the homeland ones.

This chapter also showed that, overall, Canadian Muslims give great importance to religious and spiritual beliefs and they frequently attend religious sites and participate in religious or spiritual activities. However, religiosity and pride in the Canadian identity are not correlated. Muslims of all degrees of religiosity are proud to be Canadian, are proud of Canada's democracy, and feel that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is important. No significant differences were found between Balkan Muslims and Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans in this regard.

While the collapsing of response categories led to some loss of precision, the data still provide a general picture of the importance of religion to Balkan-born Muslims. This population was shown to be less likely to accord importance to religious and spiritual beliefs, religious attendance, and religious activities compared to Muslim immigrants born outside the Balkans. While the collapsing of responses as a result of small samples to led to some loss of precision and the findings should be interpreted with caution, the data still provide a general picture of the importance of religion to Balkan-born Muslims. It should also be kept in mind that these are the responses of Balkan-born immigrants who actually identified as Muslim. As suggested by the evidence from the 2001 and 2011 population censuses, and as the findings of the qualitative analysis will further reinforce, it is possible that many Balkan-born immigrants of Muslim origin did not identify as Muslims at all in the survey.

A common-sense argument could be made that religiosity and religious identification go hand in hand. In other words, someone who is religious and practises a religion is more likely to identify as being a member of that religion. A decreased identification among Balkan immigrants

of Muslim origin would then be a result of declined religiosity. Because of insufficient samples of Balkan Muslims in earlier GSS cycles, however, I was not able to determine if the religiosity of Balkan Muslims has decreased or has always been low. Historical evidence points to the latter being the case. But, as the findings from the qualitative analysis will demonstrate, religious (dis)identification has many different underpinnings, religious belief being only one. Identification changes as time, context, and location changes. Far from operating in discourse only, these changes have significant psychological and practical consequences not only for the social actors who perform the act of (dis)identification, but also for those things they are (dis)identifying from or with. The following chapters will provide some indications of why this has been occurring.

Chapter 6

Who are "We"? Internal Ethnic and Religious Identifications and Boundaries

In this first part of the qualitative findings, I outline the historical trajectory of ethnic and religious identifications of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims. I examine how my participants' identities, identifications, beliefs, and practices, their cultural repertroires, as well the perceptions of their ethnic or religious groups and communities, have changed over time and across space and in response to changing external categorizations and structural realities of different states and societies. While Chapters 7, 8, and 9 focus on participants' boundary-making strategies in the Canadian context, the way they comprehend their past and present identities, identifications, beliefs, and practices are inevitably influenced by their interactions and experiences as immigrants in 21st-century Canada.

Before launching into analysis, I lay out a brief overview of the findings. The question of ethnic identification was straightforward for Albanian participants and their answers were consistent, with their group identity firmly defined in terms of Albanian ethnicity. In contrast, Bosnian participants, as a result of their different historical trajectory (as discussed in Chapter 2), but also possibly in part due to effects of reactivity (p. 91), had more difficulty carving out consistent answers with respect to ethnicity.

Religious identification was more straightforward for Bosnian participants. They were more likely than Albanian participants to unqualifiedly identify as Muslim, although this identification for the most part did not neatly translate into religious beliefs and practices. In fact, I found more diversity in this regard among Bosnian participants, which ranged from self-identified atheists and potential agnostics to a practising Muslim. Most Albanian participants, on

the other hand, said that they at least believed in God but did not practise Islam, while two identified as practising Muslims.

In response to conflicting "imported" and Canadian cultural repertoires, as well as because of imposed external categorizations, most participants—Albanians and Bosnians alike—shifted intra-religious boundaries and qualified their Muslim identification and origin to some extent. Those of mixed Muslim and Christian origins appeared most at ease with their religious backgrounds.

While participants were asked to talk about themselves and their ethnic groups, in illustrating their points they occasionally referred to "others"—Middle Eastern Muslims in particular, and sometimes "Canadians" and Canadian society at large. While seemingly marginal, the presence of these other groups in the narratives speaks to the importance of these social groups for delineating and defining participants' Muslimness in the context of Canada in the second decade of the 21st century.

Group Ethno-Religious Identifications over Time and across Space

Experiences of Religion during Communism

This section presents participants' narratives of their memories of growing up and living in communist and post-communist Albania and Bosnia prior to arriving in Canada, specifically in relation to their experience of religion. As discussed in Chapter 2, religion was banned in Albania in 1967, and the country was proclaimed atheist by the 1976 constitution. This is how Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, summarized this period of Albania's history:

> Albania, we're lucky in one sense, but unlucky in another sense. Lucky because our ex-dictator shot down religions from 1967 to 1991, so we are like fourth, fifth, sixth generation born without religion; on the other hand was the [fact that he was a] dictator, whatever. What this did, the closing down of religions, [is that] generations grew up without having any idea who's Muslim, Catholic or Orthodox.

A few of the participants described how this ban worked in practice:

> In the 1960s in Albania, religion was banned. The only country in the world that officially banned religion. All the mosques, churches, Catholic and Orthodox, were closed and turned into museums, sports centres, magazines etc. . . . marriages appeared to be sort of orchestrated—this Muslim man should marry that Catholic woman, the other one the Orthodox woman—to the effect that today in Albania you cannot identify who is Muslim, seeing that there are different last names. (Arsim, a man from Kosovo, 60s)

> I never went to . . . I've seen the mosque, from outside, because I believe the ladies can't even go inside, I don't even know. We were more [Muslim] by the name, but we never practised. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

> Because in the communist regime we were not allowed to talk about the religion and we were exposed to everything to eat, I'm taking just an example, pork . . . We were poor as a country because we were alone, so we had to eat whatever the government offered us to eat. If you don't have anything to eat and they will serve you just pork, you will eat it. And if you don't eat it and you mention that you are a Muslim, you will go to prison. What are you going do? Maybe there were people that were not eating [pork] or something. In my family, like my mum and my grandma, they [would] eat it, you know.

> I spent a life between two families, my father and my mother; they never spoke about religion, because back then it was not allowed. But, when I was growing up, sometimes I can hear my mum saying, "Okay, we're gonna do something good at home today because it's Ramadan," or "We're going to make a party for Christmas, or Easter." . . . we celebrated both the feasts of religion. What can I say, it was very good and I was blessed. (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s)

While Yugoslavia's communist regime had a more relaxed attitude toward religion, religion was nonetheless marginalized in the public sphere. Maja, whose father is a Catholic Croat and mother a Bosnian Muslim, recalls that prior to Yugoslavia's breakup, the family observed different religious holidays. However, she was largely unaware of their religious underpinnings:

> My father celebrated Christmas, I had no idea why he celebrated Christmas nor did he ever tell me. We coloured eggs for Easter, I had no idea why we were doing that, we would go to my aunts and uncles and go see majka and daidza [grandmother and uncle] for Bajram [Eid]—nobody ever bothered explaining to me why we were doing these things. I actually wasn't informed about any religions.

Sanela, a Bosnian woman in her 40s, likewise remembers being exposed to various religious traditions:

> We grew up in this kind of socialist country where basically religion was not really practised. We practised holidays, they were celebrated. When it comes to Eid, and both Christmases, because the family was mixed, we would visit everyone . . . We were celebrating Christmas, kind of, which was like New Year's, and I grew up with *sa božićnom jelkom*, which was a Christmas tree really, it wasn't called Christmas tree, but [that's what] it was. We looked forward to it. We were getting those packages as kids, at the same time everything was there, we had Eid that we celebrated, we had Christmases, whether Orthodox or Catholic, doesn't really matter. I was always with my Catholic friends; I never went to mosque, until recently in my hometown, I hadn't gone to our mosque there, but I went to the churches with my friends because it was a cool thing to do and go for masses.

In order to instil patriotism and foster the "Yugoslav spirit" and ethnic equality, the Yugoslav state heavily promoted "Brotherhood and Unity" (Ramet, 2006). While state-imposed, Perica (2002, p. 223) argues that "Brotherhood and Unity" represented a "public worship compatible with the Western liberal idea of religious toleration." Indeed, it is a compelling cultural repertoire of former Yugoslavia that bears similarities to public adorations of Canadian multiculturalism, especially in the context of comparisons with the United States and Western Europe. Given the Yugoslavia-wide acceptance of the mantra, it was not surprising to hear Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, allude to "Brotherhood and Unity" when she talked about growing up in a small multi-ethnic Bosnian town. The reference, however, was made in the past tense and was marked by a sense of betrayal brought on by the 1990s war:

> We were Tito's pioneers, we were youth who believed in the spirit of collectivity and it is still unclear to me when these cultural differences started, because my husband is Muslim and he would ring the bell in a church. Him and Marko, his first neighbour, would go ring the bell in a church. We would regularly attend the midnight mass. I had never gone to mosque, and the whole town would attend the midnight mass in the Catholic Church. The Serbs were never religious, the Muslims either; the Catholics always gravitated towards faith, it was always closer to them.

Another Bosnian participant describes her Muslim family's religious practices during communism:

> My parents' friends who were Muslims would drink, they probably wouldn't eat pork, but drinking was a common thing to do and they would give up booze for example for Ramadan and that was their biggest sacrifice. It's not even fasting; it's actually giving up booze. And after Ramadan is over, my dad's best friend would basically go to a *kafana* [bar] and stay for three days and my dad would have to drag him home because he's totally, he's in a coma . . . My grandma was a practising Muslim, but she was very reasonable, she would go to mosque at her own pace, she would pray at her own pace, never imposed her religion on me, she drank booze, *rakija* always, and she ate pork, and she would always tell me, even when I was a little girl, "*zlo ne ulazi u tebe, zlo izlazi iz tebe*" [Evil does not go into you, evil comes out of you]—those were basically her words and I still say that to people.

While religion was not banned in Yugoslavia, it was nevertheless repressed. Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, recalled her experiences of religion growing up in Kosovo in the 1980s:

> We as a family, we celebrated Eid and Ramadan and these things. But, I think, my father held pretty high positions back in Kosovo before, during Yugoslavia, while Yugoslavia was still alive, and I doubt that he would have said—in his workplace, meetings and what not—"It's Eid and I have to do this and that." So [communism] definitely played a role, in suppressing it. I think it is the cause for us not being as religious as some other Muslims from other countries.

Similar to Anila's experience from Kosovo, Adela recalls that being openly religious in the communist Bosnia and Herzegovina was an obstacle to professional advancement:

> Back home it was totally unpopular to be religious. I know people who could not get promoted because they would go to church, Catholics who would get sentenced for it, they were not able to join the communist party; and if you're not in the party, you can't get promoted, this was the condition. You had to be in the communist party to get promoted from one position to another, because the length of your party membership and activities were taken into consideration.

Participants narrated their personal experiences using their memories and interpretations of their home countries in the decades under communism. While in the West the word "communism" conjures up images of brutality, suffering, and poverty, Eastern Europe's relationship with its communism legacy is less straightforward (Boym, 2001; Todorova & Gille, 2010; Zimmermann,

2012). Indeed, the two meanings of communism and socialism represented another set of conflicting cultural repertoires for the participants. Many of them of them struggled to reconcile their ambiguous memories of communism with its exclusively negative meaning in the Canadian context.

My Albanian participants in particular expressed ambiguity with regard to the communist legacy. On the one hand, none of them, unlike some of my Bosnian participants, referred to their family members as communists or identified as atheists. On the other hand, several of my Albanian participants somewhat warily identified some positive outcomes of the religion ban in Albania:

> I don't know if I can say this because the communist regime is usually defined as a bad one. Of course it was a bad one because we were suffering and everything, but it was a period when we couldn't . . . we were not practising the religion because of this regime. Maybe that made people get so close with each other and they got to know each other, the culture of each other. And even if they were Muslims or whatever, Catholics or Orthodox . . . they used to live in the same environment, work with each other and get married to each other. They did believe in God, because I remember my grandma she used to say prayers. They still got along with each other like it was a very good relationship. (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s)

> Well it's one thing too, because when we had the dictator, Enver Hoxa, he forbad everything, so that's why maybe it helped in one way . . .
>
> Ivana: Do you think that was a good thing? That particular part?
>
> Vera: No, it wasn't a good thing, but in the meantime we didn't have to wear all that [religious garment], and you know, and they were more open, because before, they couldn't marry Muslim with another [religion], there had to be marriage between each other, but after [religion was banned] it was all open and they all mixed and I think that's better. More open, more modern . . . That's my opinion. (Albanian woman, 40s)

> I think, this is my personal interpretation, also the fact that after the [Second World] War, [during] the communist part, when everything was forbidden, religiously speaking, and people were forced not to work in religious terms and things, so that also played [a role in] not having any tensions or any problems. People used to get married or have families between religions, and had families, so that was not a problem. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

Unlike in other parts of former Yugoslavia, and particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Burić, 2010), any visible signs of memories of—let alone nostalgia for—Yugoslav socialism have been notably absent from Kosovo's public sphere (Schwandner-Sievers, 2010). In her fieldwork in Kosovo in 2006, Schwandner-Sievers (2010) found that nostalgic references to Yugoslavia and Tito were restricted to the private sphere as positive memories of Tito (particularly by the older generation) were eventually supplanted by the "hurt memories" and war traumas of the last decades of Yugoslavia (p. 109). Arsim, a man in his 60s, was the only Kosovar participant that expressed a more openly positive attitude toward Yugoslavia and its communist policies several times during our conversation. When discussing religious policies in Kosovo during communism, Arsim indirectly credited "the communist ideology, or socialist, however you want to call it," as well as the influence of the religion ban in Albania, for the high level of secularization among Albanians in Kosovo:

> The younger generations were not active, did not practise, except for older people . . . In Kosovo, religion, at least among my generation, the younger generation, was understood as culture, as tradition, it had absolutely nothing to do with ideology, and the level of secularization was high . . . As a family, we were like this, my late father was a teacher, one of the oldest teachers in . . . But this is how it was back then, you couldn't be a teacher and be religious. I mean the whole generation was like this . . . and former Yugoslavia was not a bad country. In terms of culture, sports, economy, it was at the level of—according to some people—it was even better than Canada, while Tito was still around.

In contrast to participants from Albania and Kosovo, my Bosnian participants communicated a much more openly positive attitude towards Yugoslavia's communist past. For instance, Maja proudly and matter-of-factly described her mother as a "communist." Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, stated that since she grew up in "a socialist, and basically communist system, my parents were communists." She decried that the word only has negative connotations in the Canadian context, and that positive aspects, such as the scientifically oriented education system,

are overlooked: “If I said the word ‘communist’ here and in this world . . . you’re familiar with the controversies around the very word ‘communism’ and how they see it. In our schools we learned Darwinism, and we grew up believing in Darwin’s theory of evolution.” As mentioned earlier, the Yugoslav state often represented its own brand of communism as “soft communism” (Grodsky, 2016; Haug, 2012). Yugoslavs were able to obtain passports and travel anywhere in the world; and in the years before communism collapsed, the state was decentralized, a “semi-market” self-management was introduced, and there was relative freedom of speech (Bugajski, 1996). Following the break-up of Yugoslavia, many former Yugoslavs who refused to participate in nationalism resorted instead to lamenting the loss of the country and engaged in “Yugo-nostalgia” (Burić, 2010). Likely as the result of the relatively high percentage of mixed marriages compared to other Yugoslav republics, as well as the high number of those identifying as Yugoslavs in former Yugoslavia’s state population censuses, Yugo-nostalgia is mainly seen in today’s Bosnia and Herzegovina, and also among immigrants in the West from Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ibid). In his fieldwork with Bosnian Muslims in Chicago, Burić (2010) exposed the centrality of Yugoslavia and Tito’s image especially among older participants.

Religion after Communism: Curiosity versus Imposed Categories

Communist regimes collapsed in 1990. After being banned or suppressed for decades, religion officially returned to the lives of Eastern Europeans. As Stan and Turcescu (2007) note, after communism was discredited, “religion, alongside nationalism, stepped in to fill the ideological void.” Some of my participants described how the social transformations affected their lives. Besa, an Albanian-born woman in her 40s, recalled becoming curious about religion:

> I didn’t grow up with religious practices and everything. Because when the regime changed, all of a sudden things were more open. People needed, and I needed, something that was forbidden until then. People needed to go to the religious places. I went to a mosque then; it was a big deal, the first time, to go

> somewhere where it was forbidden before. It was kind of, "Finally, we can do whatever we want, religion also," and after that I was exposed to, you know, all the Protestant churches and everything . . . and I was young, like, 19, 20 years old.

Some of my Bosnian participants also said that they explored religion immediately after the collapse of Yugoslavia and during the war years. Unlike Besa, however, they did so not only out of curiosity, but because religion, officially and openly, became a marker of difference that was at once imposed on them *and* used to distinguish them from non-Muslims. Recall that Maja, whose father is a Catholic Croat and mother a Bosnian Muslim, had been largely unaware of religions. This changed at the beginning of the 1990s. She recalls feeling pressured to place herself in an ethnic and/or religious category:

> 1991-1992 comes when suddenly the nationalist parties started growing and suddenly there is the Muslim, there is the Croat or Catholic, there is the Orthodox, and I remember coming home from school, I was [in middle school], and asking my mum, "What am I?" She told me, "I was Muslim, kind of, by birth and your dad is Catholic. "Okay, and what am I?" And she says, "Whatever you want to be."

Maja responded to the external imposition of religious categories by learning about religions: "As the war started I actually started reading, and read all kinds of Muslim books because most of my friends were Muslim. I wanted to learn and read all kinds of Catholic stuff and little bit of Bible and everything." Unlike Maja, who had two religious identifications to choose from, Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, recalled being cornered into a category she was not sure she belonged to:

> It will never be clear to me when those distinctions began and when all of a sudden I was supposed to become Muslim, why I was suddenly persecuted for being Muslim, and I had never been [Muslim]. I *was*, by birth, I did not choose my parents, but they were communists and they never made any distinctions among people.

Following from this external categorization, Adela said, “As a Muslim, I started to be afraid, and then I became a believer out of fear.” Adela’s experience is a fitting example of how power and force can lead to external categorization and reshape group categorization. As Jenkins (2008a) notes, “the categorized, without the physical capacity to resist the carrying of identity cards, the wearing of armbands, or whatever more subtle devices of identification and stigmatization might be deployed may, in time, come to see themselves in the language and categories of the oppressor” (p. 190).

Jenkins (2008a, p. 75) also speaks of “the oppressed who resist” imposed boundaries and categorizations. Another Bosnian participant illustrated this point. She talked about the years she spent as a refugee in Croatia in the early 1990s, prior to coming to Canada as a refugee. This participant had studied and worked in Croatia for some time when the armies of Bosnian Croats, supported by Croatia, and Bosnian Muslims entered into conflict. She recalls that Croatian authorities suddenly demanded that Bosnian Muslim refugees acquire a refugee “green card” in order to be able to obtain free food and financial support:

> I was waiting for the war to stop, and the police came and asked me for the white card [for Croatian citizens]. I didn’t have it. And they asked me for a green card, and I didn’t have a green card. And I ended up in prison in the end. I stayed that night in the prison because of that, and I [had to go to court]. I did nothing wrong. In the end it turned out that they were after money, and we paid them I don’t know how much for me to be released. And at that moment I said, now I’m going learn everything that’s possible. I could have chosen to be either way, to become really religious because of that, or because of my own desire to become religious, but I never did. I think it was just spite.

Similar to Adela, the external labelling and persecution on the basis of a faith that she had never truly identified with prompted this participant to explore Islam—“out of spite.” As we will see later, however, when circumstances changed (notably upon arriving in Canada as refugees) and they were both able to regain a sense of power in their lives, these two participants rejected

religion (albeit to different degrees) and opted for more personalized systems of belief. The subsequent chapters will show that the freedom to self-identify was again brought into question in the post-9/11 period in Canada when new dominant cultural repertoires of the meanings of "Muslim" were introduced to and imposed onto Balkan Muslims.

Intra-Ethnic Religious Boundaries

Participants observed a revival[33] of the importance of religion within their ethno-religious groups in the decades following the fall of communism. They also, however, noted that not everyone was willing to participate in these social transformations. Several participants indicated that the changes led to solidifying intra-ethnic religious boundaries between the religious and non-religious:

> Suddenly, populism, religion makes a big entrance, and after the 1990s, suddenly all of those who were atheists became great believers, some more, some less, but de-secularization occurred. This is a problem in the Balkans, de-secularization, suddenly all of those who used to be great communists and atheists became great believers. Mosques started being built, churches, crosses being mounted on top of hills, etc. De-secularization occurred. This is the problem in the region. (Arsim, a man from Kosovo, 60s)

A few Bosnian participants also noted that many Bosnian Muslims who previously identified as atheists do not do so today. Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, observed that before the 1990s war most Bosnian Muslims were "atheist and agnostic," while "most non-white Muslims" were and still are religious. However, "since the war, since the 1990s, I think there are more similarities than differences in that respect, I think that a lot of people in Bosnia and Herzegovina believe in God as Muslims and practise their religion." Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, based her observations on the Bosnian Muslim community in Canada:

> There are few like-minded people, atheists who remained atheists. Many now identify as religious because it is at least accepted. Here [in Canada] it is popular now to be religious . . . My fellow atheists lost their way, went into these circles of these sort of uber-believers, and these uber-believers have become a bit difficult, they impose on you what you should or should not do.

A few participants described how the new religious heterogeneity in the public sphere has led to tensions within their ethnic communities. Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, told me about a colleague in Albania, a "good Muslim, [who] was a practicant":

> He found a place at our work and he made the prayers there, even during the work time. And sometimes there were some people that found that not to be normal. I always said, "Let him do it, he is okay; when you go out for a cigarette, you take your time, so let him do it, he has his time, about ten minutes, let him do whatever he wants, it's okay." But sometimes people got annoyed.

A few participants referred to minor incidences between religious and non-religious Albanian and Bosnian Muslims in Canada, revolving mostly around diet and alcohol:

> I can mention, though, a small incident, like very recently, and that took a religious turn because of one event, I can't remember if it was our national, Independence Day or something like that. The community, the board of the Albanian community or whatever you call it, tried to organize a party and they decided on the menu and one of the sauces was with wine and the post was put on the Facebook page and one person said, "Oh, try and change that because it's anti-Muslim." The other person, who was answering, was saying "It's not anti-Muslim, we didn't decide it because of that," and it turned into a long discussion, and they changed the sauce. The person in charge of communication was saying, "Try and don't make it this big a deal, it's not because of being anti-Muslim or anything," but because it was public and it took a weird turn, they changed it. People are ready to do accommodations like that and let's say when we used to get together, people that don't drink, they don't drink, they are not forced to, but they can stay at the same table with the people who drink. So that was kind of a situation, [but in the end] people were tolerant about each other and partying, dancing, singing and all being friendly. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

Gentijana, recounted a similar story; this time, the point of contention was the eating of pork:

---

[33] Merdjanova notes that the "revival" of religion in the Balkans was simply a restoration of forbidden or

> I saw last year a small debate on Facebook about something that it was organizing, a party, and somebody made the menu with the meat, pork, and some Albanians they didn't eat it because it was something . . . I'm sure who organized that party, maybe he didn't think about it.
>
> Ivana: So they were offended?
>
> Gentijana: Not offended, but they said that they should have thought about it. And this caused a bit of tension, but it was the first time that I had heard about [something like that].

One Bosnian participant said that similar disagreements occurred in her local Bosnian Muslim community organization:

> Those who are religious want to impose on you—for example, you cannot drink. There is a party and music, you are sitting, and those who drink, mind you I do not drink and I do not mind, but it bothers me that adults go out in the parking lot and pour alcohol in plastic bottles, and everyone is drunk at the end of a party where they were sitting and not drinking! And when you tell them that this is wrong, it is illogical, even though I drink water my whole life, but it bothers me that adults behave . . . this is hypocrisy, for whom? And of course, when you say this, everyone has an issue with you. And those who drink, and hide it so no one sees it, there are always issues, because they don't know how to behave. You end up nowhere, no one accepts you. They want to feel like they belong to a group—even if it's a wrong one, it's a group. A group is like a herd where you feel protected.

This participant also said that the differences between religious and non-religious Bosnian Muslims eventually led to the disintegration of the local Bosnian Muslim organization, "under the pressure from these little groups who call you a non-Muslim, an infidel who doesn't know or respect their traditions."

Another participant's description of a Bosnian Muslim wedding illustrates further the intra-ethnic tensions between the religious and the non-religious:

> Me and the other girls were pinning [flowers on] people coming in and I had a really nice basket and had a half litre of whiskey in the basket so we can get

---

neglected traditions (2013, p. 107).

> refreshed and these Muslims from Kitchener came and I wanted to pin the man and they said you can't do that, you can't touch me, so I gave it to his wife then she pinned it on him; he wouldn't allow another person to touch him. And they are from Bosnia, come on.

Several authors have noted that alcohol and ("modern" vs. religious) dress are often used as evidence of Balkan Muslims' "compatibility" with Europe and the West (e.g. Helms, 2008). These practices also have a clear gendered component: debates about dress tend to revolve around women, while alcohol-consumption is a marker of the liberal values of Balkan Muslims men (Mesarič, 2015). In the current study, however, women were just as likely as men to bring up alcohol consumption as an example of a practice causing a rift between religious and non-religious Muslims. For instance, a participant told me an alcohol-related story about her own family:

> My personal experience with my sister-in-law . . . she knew where I stand and what I do and what my views are . . . I was visiting my mother . . . and I think my brother [went out] for a soccer game and I was going hang out with [my sister-in-law] that night . . . and I brought a bottle of wine and I'm like, "Here I am!" and she looks at me and says, "It's Ramadan, we don't allow drinking in this house." And I just looked at her, I'm like, "Fine, then I guess I'll just have to go back to my mum's place and drink" and I did. She was a little bit . . . she thought I was mad at her and honestly I couldn't care less. This is what she wants and I respect it but I expect her to respect also where I stand. So I went and had a bottle of wine by myself, it's just fine. She really wanted me to leave that bottle and hang out, which was not going to happen.

Overall, these accounts point to the fragmented nature of Albanian and Bosnian communities in Canada. Burić (2010) observed a similar conflictual dynamic between the religious and the non-religious while conducting his fieldwork with Bosnian Muslims in Chicago, albeit the differences had a clear age and gender component. In contrast, the participants in my study who had reservations about the interpolations of their co-ethnics' religious beliefs and practices into their personal and social routines varied in age and gender.

Intra-Group Gendered Religious Boundaries

The majority of the participants remarked on a change that most of them found problematic: the practice of head and/or face coverings among women. Indeed, while the vast majority of Albanian and Bosnian women do not cover their hair, there has been a noted increase in the practice in the past two decades (Funk, 2015; Helms, 2008; Mesarič, 2015). Also, as Merdjanova (2013, p. 92), noted, women in the Balkans wear mostly colourful hijabs, while niqabs and burqas are very rare. These points were echoed by the participants. Most participants, nonetheless, described the shift as one that was difficult to come to terms with:

> Well, I think, Albanians, they are all the same all around the world. I don't think we have differences in this. But I can tell you a fact, I have a cousin that is in London, it might [have been] maybe ten years [that] I [haven't spoken] with her, but when I asked my mum one day how she's doing or what she's doing, she said that they had gone deep into the Muslim religion and they put on the veil and stuff and they were not coming into our community anymore because they are going in the other direction. And [my mother] was not pleased about it. I think we don't like to be that fundamentalist in religion. We don't like each other to be like that. Even my mum—she's Muslim, she's devote—she told me it's not a good thing to be like this, to go that deep into these things, because you never know what will come up. (Albanian woman, 40s)

> It has changed. I see that right now there are certain groups that start to dress more traditionally, women and men: that's kind of new and kind of weird. We are not that used to that. There are groups of people right now . . . but I know that people are starting to dress more like traditional Muslims, people with scarves and long dresses—I don't know what they call them—and men with long things and beard, so that kind of started in Albania. It was not like that, but started now, so that is interesting. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s, likewise says that in Albania the practice of head covering is more common now than before, although still rare. She interprets it as a response to regime change coupled with religious and patriarchal norms: "You know, in Albania [it] wasn't [common], but I know when democracy came in 1990 some of them, depends who they were

married to, they put on the veil, how you call it? In general, everybody's free to wear what they like to."

Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, told me that prior to immigrating to Canada, she was informed about Canada's diversity: "So when I came to Canada, and I saw women with scarves, it was something they prepared us for, because I knew Canada has many cultures." She said that life in Canada has "taught" her to be accepting of others' practices and choices: "Well, because I've been in Canada for this many years I know it's something that is very individual, and it's a choice and I have no judgment about it." Ariana, however, finds it difficult to apply "Canadian-style" tolerance to her own ethnic group. She told me she saw a few covered Muslim women during her last visit to Albania:

> Most people see it as a bit of strange, knowing that Albania is not a religious country, and to me, I never saw the trend, all because I haven't lived in Albania for seven years. When I was there, I didn't really go often to other cities, but when I went to visit, it was like a . . . I mean it wasn't very [many] people, but maybe two, three people when I'd go for a walk. It was very rare, but it was difficult to digest, because in my eyes, Albania is not a religious country.

Ariana is evidently not sure what to make of what she saw. In her mind, irreligiosity is part and parcel of Albania's national identity. The presence of covered women violates this image of her home country. The scarf is something she associates with other, religious Muslims, but not Albanians. There is a dissonance between this image and the sight of seeing Albanian women with headscarves (in Albania):

> But at the same time it shocked me knowing that Albania is a not a religious country. To me my first reaction was, "Why are these women wearing that." I mean, they shouldn't, because it's not who we are, I guess who they are, not who we are; it's very individual, so I can't judge that . . .what surprised me was some Albanian women were wearing it, because, to me, they are not religious. I mean, they are, but Albania is a country that is not religious.

Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, echoed Ariana's remarks. She said that prior to coming to Canada she would sometimes see older women cover their hair:

> . . . because when I was growing up—I moved out of there in 1999—and during that period of time it was not uncommon to see my grandma covered; if I'm correct, she covered her head after her husband died . . . But my mom was never covered, my aunt was never covered.

However, after 1999, Anila told me that she too observed an increase in the number of women who cover their hair, including young women in Kosovo: "I have seen some my age and a little bit younger and in my head I'm, like, what are you doing? You know, why are we going back?" She interprets this as an influence of Muslim countries from the Middle East:

> Especially after the war, especially after many different non-profit organizations going in, helping with whatever had to be done there following the war, there has been an increased influence from Arabic countries, and I've seen increase in people that are covered . . . It's hearsay, it's what I've heard, it's not validated, but I have heard while I was there that with these not-for-profit organizations that have come following the war, people would be paid to cover, so they can almost use it to revive the religion and perhaps get them on board with their beliefs and what not. It's not validated; I don't know if it's true.

Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, also noted that Albanian women do not generally practise hair or face covering: "Let's say Albanian women. They don't wear the hijab, they don't close all the eyes and face. There are some Albanian women they wear, like, a scarf, they cover the head, but in general they don't wear stuff like that."

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, was the only participant whose wife wears a hijab. He, however, also mentioned that the practice is not common among Albanian women in Canada. He touched on the political divisions that the question of hijabs is creating in today's Kosovo:

> Islam in Kosovo is a very big problem. Because you have atheists and Muslims. In the government, the atheists have the control. And it's a very big fight over there between believers and the government. Girls are not allowed to go to

> school with a hijab in Kosovo. This is a big problem. In Canada you can go with a hijab, okay not a niqab, but a hijab. In Canada you can pray everywhere you want. Park, school. Over there in Kosovo, you cannot go to school in a hijab. This is not good. The people in the parliament got the votes from the people, and then they changed their minds. They lied to us just to get the votes. They have two faces. They are hypocrites. When you say something you keep your word.

Arsim, a man from Kosovo in his 60s, echoed Besim's assessment of the political situation in Kosovo:

> For example, in Kosovo, scarves, hijabs are banned in schools. I think it is not okay to ban them, because if the constitution guarantees women's rights, you can't forbid anyone [from wearing it]. It is counterproductive, what is happening in Kosovo now.

Most Albanian participants said that the practice is more common in Albania and Kosovo than in Canada:

> Ivana: Do you know of any Albanian women in Canada who wear that?
>
> Vera: No. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)
>
> I have seen some back home, here no; but to be honest, I haven't even been in contact with these people, I have never talked to them, they are not part of my circle. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)
>
> No, not in Canada, no I haven't. (Anila, Kosovar woman, mid-30s)
>
> Not in Canada. There was a girl: she was the only one. I don't know absolutely. . . where she is now. I think somewhere in Malaysia; she is not in Canada anymore. She was the only young girl. Although older women don't wear it either. Well, I do not count old women, they wear it regardless of religion. Older women wear it when their husbands die, I don't know why, that was the custom. But not because of religion, but because of the custom. (Arsim, Kosovar man, 60s)
>
> No. Wait, I am telling you no, but . . . As I told you, usually when we do events and things, people from Kosovo are also in our events, because they are Albanian. Some of them, because religion was not forbidden there, like in Albania, so I think they kept it more traditional, so sometimes some of them would wear scarves. But Albanians from Albania, I never met one, here in Canada, wearing a scarf or something. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

Unlike Albanian participants, who immigrated to Canada in the late 1990 and 2000s and personally experienced the post-communist social transition and accompanying changes,

Bosnian participants arrived in Canada the first half of the 1990s as refugees while the war in Bosnia was still ongoing. Their observations were limited to the prewar period and the Canadian context. Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, recalled that religious dress was uncommon in former Yugoslavia. During the war, however, she says that many women became religious "out of spite." Her comment is another illustration of how imposed external categorizations can lead to a redefinition of group identities: "After this last war many people said 'if you're killing me for being Muslim, I will become Muslim.'"

Like Anila, Adela also interprets the increase in the practice as an influence of Arabic countries, as she told me:

> I think that people from Arabic countries, the United Emirates, were sent to pay people to dress in a certain way, to wear a hijab, well you know what's happening over there. Men, drastic cases of female genital mutilation, removal of the clitoris so that they cannot enjoy sex. An anomaly has occurred among Bosnian Muslims that had never happened before. Changes occurred.

Sanela, a Bosnian woman in her 40s, voiced opposition to all forms of religious head covering:

> Even if you go now, when you go to Sarajevo, when you see the people . . . that are covered from head to toe, I don't associate with them because I don't like it. I feel a little bit of discomfort, because I'm not used to it, and it's almost like you're not belonging here.

All of the Bosnian participants said that knew of Bosnian Muslim women in Canada who practise wearing head or face coverings. Their interpretations of the practice differed. One participant sees the increase in the practice as a direct result of imposed external categorizations, as she told me:

> I think this is a result of trauma. How can you tell people now not to believe in God, not to be a nationalist, not to judge other faiths, not to make distinctions? This is why people, in Canada there are Bosnian Muslims who cover themselves who had never done it before, exactly for those reasons, disappointment, spite. If I am different, I will be different. (Adela, Bosnian woman, 50s)

Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, likewise pointed out that the practice of head and face coverings used to be uncommon in Bosnia. Today, some young Bosnian Muslim women in Canada follow the practice. Unlike Adela, Mirsada could provide no explanation for it:

> I find it absurd. Their mothers do not cover themselves and they do, in the middle of Canada. I can't explain this. There is no explanation. I practise, I fast, I pray, but I wear shorts. Right at this moment I am wearing a mini skirt. I think those two, three girls that I know that cover themselves and their mothers do not might be under the influence of friends from university, or maybe socializing with Arabs. I don't understand, I cannot understand.

Sanela reported that she has seen covered Bosnian Muslim women in Canada only in the Bosnian centre, which functions both as a mosque and a cultural centre: "In a mosque, yes, where they are just kind of praying; but no, I don't know anybody actually." Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, said she knows of a few Bosnian Muslim women who cover their hair and one who covers her face, noting that that the latter is a "laughing stock" of the community. Finally, Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, told me that she does not know any Bosnian women who cover their hair or face.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the question of "compatibility" of Muslims with "Western" values looms large not only in Western democracies, but also in post-communist societies such as Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. For instance, most participants in Mesarič's (2013) study of Muslim women in Bosnia reported that they do not practise hair covering and indicated that "the fact that they do not cover their hair does not make them any less of a believer, and [that they see] veiling as something that is not compatible with the time (modernity) and place (Europe) they live in" (p. 20). Despite the diversity of both practice and *opinion* about this custom in the Balkans, the question of Muslim women's head dress is arguably even more contentious in Western societies than in Muslim-majority countries such as Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia. While the accounts presented in this section are seemingly

restricted to simple evaluations of the practice among their co-ethnics, participants' narratives are informed by their minority status in Canada and the socio-political realities related to the question of Muslims in the West. As such, announcing their position on the practice may be more consequential for Balkan Muslim women immigrants who do not cover their hair (and it appears as if the majority do not) than for women who live in the Balkans. In fact, as will be argued in Chapter 9, airing opinions that signal an agreement between the cultural repertoires of the meanings of the practice in the Balkans and in Canada may play an integrative social function—although it comes at a price.

Intra-Ethnic Regional Boundaries among Albanians

As described earlier, regional differences exist among Albanians in terms of religious denominations. According to the most recent population censuses, Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia are predominantly (over 90%) Muslim, while Albania is more religiously diverse, although most people (over 50%) are Muslim. Furthermore, Albanians in Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia lived through communist state regimes that regulated religion differently. Finally, their ethno-religious identities have been shaped by relations with different non-Albanian, Orthodox Christian groups (Serbs for the Kosovars, and Macedonians for Albanians in Macedonia). A few of my Albania-born participants touched on these religious differences between Albanians from Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia:

> People from Kosovo kind of kept [the religion]. Even during the period that in Albania was forbidden. I think they are more traditional, without being radical, but more traditional than the Albanians from Albania. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

> I think they were more practicants of the religion, Muslim religion in Kosovo, yes. That I can tell for sure. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

> I would say there are some Albanian people from Kosovo, from Macedonia, I would say, in my opinion, that are stricter practicants than us; if we compare the

> Albanians from Kosovo and Macedonia, they [practise more]. (Leka, Albanian man, late 20s)

> With Kosovo it was different. They were [stricter] practicants of their religion . . . people coming from Kosovo they will have names more like Muslim names. (Gentijana, Albanian woman in her 40s)

Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, attributed the regional differences among Albanians to differences in urbanity and education:

> I worked in Macedonia, for the UN, and even in Kosovo for the UN, and I see a big difference between main cities, and mountain villages. Me and [my wife] were surprised because we lived three months in Skopje. Two sisters, Muslim family, one of them managed to finish university, dressed in jeans, shorts and whatever. The other one just finished elementary school, dressed in head scarf and everything. Two sisters, from the same family. Me and [my wife], we considered that as extreme, because in Albania it happened but not all the time.

He clarified that the urban versus rural distinction applies not to Albania, but to Macedonia and Kosovo's rural areas:

> This usually happened in the mountains, a little bit further from civilization, and my personal opinion, not for Albania, I'm talking about Macedonia and Kosovo, they found a reason to keep their tradition and nationality, with the Muslim religion.

However, unlike Besa and Gentijana, another participant found that these differences are not necessarily noticeable in Canada:

> Our best friends in the family, they're from Kosovo—the gentleman that works with me, from Mitrovica, and the lady from Prishtina—both of them are Muslim. We never saw the lady covered, and when we go for a visit or they come, everybody stays in the same room, which, if you go basic on Muslim religion, is not allowed—females have to be apart from males and so on. (Albanian participant)

Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, also questioned the narrative of religious Kosovars, although she focused on the younger generation in Canada:

> Kosovo people are also, much more than us in Albania, perceived to be hard-core Muslims, which is not necessarily true for them, either. But they are very similar to me, like a . . . they might have gotten their values from their parents

> and grandparents, but the younger generation, they have lost it all. They don't talk about religion, they don't follow religion at all.

While most Albanians from Albania touched on the deeper attachment to Islam of Kosovar and Macedonian Albanian Muslims, I did not observe the reverse: Albanian participants from Kosovo did not report that they were in general more religious than Muslims from Albania. For instance, Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, repeatedly emphasized that Albanians from Kosovo, just like their compatriots from Albania, are not very religious. He did, however, note that Albanians in Macedonia are more religious than Albanians from Kosovo and Macedonia. He explained that this heightened religiosity is the result of tensions with the ethnic Macedonians, the majority of whom are Orthodox Christians:

> [For] Albanians in Macedonia, religion is more important…In Macedonia, we have a problem. There are differences [between] Macedonians, who are Orthodox, and Albanians, [who are] Muslim. Even though Albanians participate in the government, it's not half and half, but it is 60:40, so ministers, deputy ministers, directors, they are all present in the institutions. A bit more, they identify a bit more [with religion]. [But] on the other side we have the same thing—Macedonians are now very religious, they have gone so deep into religion that it is unheard of: there is a cross on top of every hill, the school years starts with a consecration—[however] secularism is in the constitution. There are more tensions between Albanians and Macedonians, although the tensions are more political than religious.

Despite the regional differences that Albanian participants pointed out, the narrative of Albanianism prevails over the intra-ethnic regional differences, as Albanians from Albania and Kosovo typically socialize together in Canada: "We usually party together, from Albania and Kosovo. I have friends from Kosovo and I have friends from Albania. We all go out together and we don't see a difference. It's just that we are Albanians and this is good" (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s).

Intra-Ethnic Religious Differences among Albanians

As noted earlier, Albanians in Kosovo and Macedonia are predominantly Muslim, while Albania is more religiously diverse, albeit with a majority of Muslims. The Albania-born participants in particular expressed pride in the multifaith character of their ethnic group:

> In Albania it's [particular], the [question of] religion. Even before, I don't think it was strong enough to define people, you are Muslim and you are Orthodox. I can say that we were most Albanians. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)
>
> I tell stories because people usually are curious about my country. They don't know the history of the country, because [it is] a small country in Europe. They maybe know about Kosovo than about Albania itself. But sometimes they don't know that we are a mixed religions country. So I tell stories and people, they are very amazed when they hear what I am about to say. They are surprised and they say it's a good thing that in Albania we were like this. (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s)
>
> [W]hen I talk to people about religion I say that we have good harmony between religions [in Albania]. There are four religions: Muslim, Catholic, Orthodox, and Bekhtashi, and as an example, last September there was Papa Francesco, so he wanted to visit Albania. He chose Albania, it was the first visit that he made in Europe, and he chose Albania because we are a good example right now in the world because we have good harmony between religions. (Leka, Albanian man, late 20s)

A few Albania-born participants described how this religious diversity functions in practice:

> I am so proud [of] this, let's say 60% of the population [is Muslim], and they are moderates. [This] religion . . . between me and you, [is] the most hated religion, right now, at this very moment. But we are so far, let's say, on the left, not right, moderate religion. My mom, in front of her apartment building, has a Catholic, and on the side has an Orthodox family. So, imagine three religions, living together almost every day, for months, holidays, and they exchange visits, and no problems. That's why I'm saying, I'm proud of being Albanian. (Ervin, Albanian man, 50s)
>
> There was a thing called arranged marriages, 20, 30 years ago. That doesn't happen anymore. I think it's cultural progress. But at the same time, what I have to say is Albania has never ever had an incident of religious nature, never. That's one thing about Albanians—they do, we do have all religions, not all of course, the main ones, the majority of them are Muslim, because of the history. But we never had a conflict or problems that had to do with religions. Something that in other countries might be considered very unconventional,

> such as marrying a person of a different religion, in Albania it's pretty normal—like all my uncles and aunts, they are married to the opposite religion, Muslim, Orthodox, Christian and all that. It never was an issue. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)

In Canada, Albanians of different religious backgrounds socialize together:

> People still get together, usually. We had an Albanian writer that used to say a saying, and people still use it, something like, "The religion of Albanian is Albanianism". . . Usually people in Albania used to put ethnicity above religion. So people here try to do that also . . . When we have national holidays—whatever events, historical or whatever, or New Years or things like that—people from all over get together. So people are like really from different religions, we don't have, like, another Muslim party or another Christian party, or whatever. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

> [Y]ou can see from the names, you can define sometimes people with the background, Muslims or Orthodox, you can tell . . . But when you sit and talk to them, everybody will have in their circle, let's say, circle of friends, they will have people that are from different religions and they have very good friendships and relationships with them. (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s)

> We have three of them: Orthodox, Christian, and Catholic. I never had problem. I had friends there, different, they're Catholic, they're Orthodox, never a problem, all the time welcome, or friends, every time. It is like, a big community here, and we do parties and stuff, or celebrate. We're all the time there with them. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

> If it's not a problem back home, it's not here. People have been marrying . . . Albanians don't ask about religions, when you meet someone and when you decide about marriage, religion is the last thing, it's not even mentioned. It's something that doesn't influence relationships at all. If I were to meet someone and marry them, my parents would not ask me what religion he's from. They'll probably never ask about it. They would ask about ethnicity, but never religion. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)

All in all, similar to the case of regional differences among Albanians, participants emphasized that Albanian ethnicity prevails over intra-ethnic religious differences. The narrative of Albanianism looms large in the responses of the Albanian participants, and represents the most significant imported cultural repertoire that participants drew upon. Importantly, as will be show in the subsequent chapters, the narrative of Albanianism also plays an important integrative

function for Albanian immigrants in Canada, in that it simultaneously dispels Muslim stereotypes and asserts similarity with the Canadian culture.

Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Boundaries: Bosnian Muslims

Since most Bosnian Muslims come from Bosnia, my Bosnian participants did not draw regional intra-ethnic boundaries. There is, however, ethno-religious diversity within the country of birth. The Albanian participants drew on the narrative of Albanianism to highlight intra-ethnic regional and religious diversity and tolerance. However, as a result of the 1990s conflicts and continuing inter-ethnic tensions, the Bosnian participants could not resort to this strategy. Stories of inter-ethnic harmony, so prominent in the accounts of Albanian participants, were limited to the communist Yugoslavia's period, and absent from the accounts belonging to the present. Adela alluded to it in her reference to communist Yugoslavia's state slogan of "brotherhood and unity." Melisa mentioned that before the war, they had a Serbian neighbour with whom she got along very well. Maja and Sanela mentioned socializing with members of other ethnic groups and celebrating all religious holidays.

Maja was the only participant who mentioned current inter-ethnic relations among Bosnian Muslims, Serbs, and Croats in Canada. According to her, inter-ethnic boundaries persist among the three communities and there is resistance to inter-ethnic mixing. While this was not the subject of the interview, it nonetheless reveals the differences in the narratives between the Albanian and Bosnian participants. Importantly, it shows that, compared to Albanian Muslims, Bosnian Muslims may have fewer strategies to resort to in order cope with anti-Muslims sentiments in Canada.

Who Are We Now?

Despite their complex and turbulent historical trajectories and intra-group heterogeneity, Albanian and Bosnian Muslims have a consolidated general image of their ethno-religious groups. Overall, both the Albanian and Bosnian participants viewed their respective groups as generally indifferent towards religion and as highly secularized:

> I think always that Muslim part, even if it is a big part of the religion background, was never really extremist in Albania. That is its specificity . . . I think we are not . . . that Albanians are not [strict] practicants of religion, personally I think this. We believe in God, but we are not practicants, that makes a difference. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

They also explained exactly how Albanian Muslims do not practise religion. Ervin pointed to institutional and ideological characteristics:

> Only one thing I can tell you, the Muslim religion in Albania, even today after 50 years, I'm not capable of distinguishing if it is Sunni or Shia. However, between me and you, the majority of Muslims in Albania, they don't have mosques. We have, we call it "tekkes"—it's a sacred place. I don't know what side of the Muslim religion that comes from, and those guys have always been more liberal, they were more secular, more educated, they had universities and so on . . . But they were more in a sense—you have to let go, you don't have to follow the rules. They [don't hold so tightly] to the basic Muslim religion.

Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, describes religious leniency in terms of religiously prescribed dietary restrictions:

> The Albanian people are 70% Muslims, but I would say only about 30–35% of this population are practicants. The other people say that we are Muslims but they are not practicants, some say for themselves they are Muslims, but they eat pork and drink alcohol.

For Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, Albanian Muslims are distinct because they prioritize ethnicity over religion:

> I always say that we were never—and I don't know if this is the right term—but die-hard Muslims, and the fact that, in Kosovo, or in my town, it was the traditions that were instilled in us before the religion. So in my opinion, that's

> what makes us different, because, even with my daughter, I explained to her that we are Albanians, from Kosovo, grandma and grandpa are still there, and religion has come up, and yes, we are Muslim, but to me and in my family first and foremost was Albanian tradition, and Muslim religion was almost a second thing.

Like Anila, Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s who identifies as a "moderate Muslim," places ethnicity before religion. Unlike ethnicity, which is primordial ("we were born Albanians"), religion, for Sami, is a question of democracy and personal choice:

> Now because of moderation and because we live in Europe, us Albanians, we don't push for religion as much. Because as I said, we are Albanians, we were born Albanians, and religion pretty much, because we come from two—Christianity and Muslims—we don't really push people to believe whatever . . . Because now we have media, technology, you can see other interviews that back home people are very moderate and religion is optional. It's whatever you think. I even have one of my best friends, he gave up religion, he's atheist, so that's how much of democracy we have back home.

Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, says that the same applies to Albanian Muslims in Canada:

> Albanians who came here from Kosovo, I remember, we were in a camp, there were five camps, refugee camps, and I was in one—it was a military base—and they made something like a mosque. When they saw that no one was going to the mosque, they asked, "What is this?" I tried to explain to them that we are Muslims, but we do not practise. Just like myself and my generation: we drink alcohol, we always have, now, but also before, we had the religion that had absolutely no influence.

Besim is a practising Muslim from Kosovo. He described the ethno-national composition of the mosque he attends regularly:

> Africans, but I don't know from which countries, and Algerians. Algerians and Africans, Tunisians, Morocco, Nigeria . . . Albanians are Muslims, but they are not practicants. In the mosque I go to, you can see a maximum of ten people from Kosovo, Albania, praying . . . Most Albanian Muslims are not practicants.

My Bosnian participants likewise said that, despite the revival of religion in the Balkans, Bosnian Muslims in general are still not very religious. Importantly, participants firmly tied non-religiosity to specific moral and social values, particularly openness and tolerance:

> They are not strict in terms of all the religious matters: what is allowed, what isn't. Boundaries and standards are different, ethical values are different, freedoms are different, clothing, attitudes towards what is strictly forbidden, flexibility. Even if you are religious, there is certain flexibility in terms of alcohol, clothing, going out, going to the beach, covering and uncovering bodies, weddings. Back in the day our weddings were civic, whereas in these other countries they are religious, just like in Canada. It is implied you will have a church and a priest. (Adela, Bosnian woman, 50s)

Behar, a man from Kosovo in his 50s, described Albanian Muslims in relation to both non-Albanian Muslims and "Canadians": "They don't wear those burqas. They are normal, like Canadians. Everything is the same, they wear the same suits. There might be some people, but I don't know any." Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s—who, interestingly, identified herself as a practising Muslim who prays, fasts, and does not eat pork—described Bosnian and "European Muslims" in general as "Muslims by name only, they very rarely practise their religion and do not have prejudice towards other people." Maja says that despite the changes she has observed, "even now majority people are still very liberal, they don't cover up themselves like 100% of population. So I do explain to [other people] that we are very liberal Muslims."

Who Am I?

In the previous section, I examined how participants described the trajectories of their *group* ethnic and religious identifications, beliefs, and practices. In this section, I delve into how they *personally* identify in terms of ethnicity and religion.

Individual Ethnic Identifications

The first question in the demographic questionnaire was the participant's ethnic background. All Albanian participants, including those who came from Kosovo, indicated "Albanian" as their ethnicity, and confirmed their choice during the interview:

> Well, ethnicity, I'm Albanian. I don't know if I have to elaborate all that. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

> I'm an Albanian, with the ethnic group of Albania. (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s)

This certitude is not surprising, given that Albanian ethnicity is not tied to a specific religion. While most Albanians are Muslim, Albanian Christians have no distinct ethnic category and also identify as ethnic Albanians. And yet, there is some ethnic fluidity among the Kosovo-born: in the 2011 NHS, a quarter of those surveyed identified as Kosovar and not Albanian. This could have been simply a result of the fact that "Kosovar" was available as an ethnic origin response, not necessarily indicating a diminished importance of Albanian identification among the quarter of the Kosovo-born Canadian residents. It would have been interesting nevertheless to examine the reasons behind choosing "Kosovar" over "Albanian" identification."[34] None of the Kosovo-born participants in the current study identified as ethnic Kosovars in the questionnaire.

The complex historical and linguistic trajectory of the ethnic identification of Bosnian Muslims discussed in Chapter 2 was reflected to some extent in the responses of my Bosnian participants. When filling out the questionnaire in English, four participants indicated their ethnic origin as "Bosnian." Maja, whose father is an ethnic Croat (Catholic) and mother a Bosnian Muslim, and Nina, whose father is a Bosnian Muslim and mother an ethnic Serb (Orthodox Christian), also indicated their ethnic origins as Bosnian and did not list a second ethnic origin. In contrast, Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, did not return the English-language questionnaire. She identified as Bošnjak (Bosniak) during the interview conducted in the Bosnian language. I do wonder if her answer would have been different had the question been asked in English.

---

[34] Leandrit (2017) provides an interesting discussion as to whether Kosovar ethnic identity should be differentiated from Albanian.

In contrast to the five participants who identified as either Bosnian or Bosniak, Sanela's response—part in Bosnian, part in English—illustrates the complex trajectory of the Bosnian Muslim ethnic identification:

> I'm a Bosnian, Bosnjak, whatever, at the moment, I used to be ex-Yugoslavian and I grew up as ex-Yugoslavian, or Yugoslavian, so it's ridiculous for me, everything that's going on, or went on.

"At the moment" indicates that Sanela is unsure if and for how long the current identification will remain stable. She was once Yugoslavian, and then she became ex-Yugoslavian, Bosniak, or Bosnian.

The age at which participants arrived in Canada also may also affect ethnic identification. Five of six of the Bosnian participants came to Canada as adults. Sanela grew up in Yugoslavia and was socialized into the Yugoslav identity—hence she had the added complexity of having to shed that identity once Yugoslavia ceased to exist. In contrast, Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s who came to Canada in the first half of the 1990s as a child refugee, indicated in the questionnaire that her ethnicity was Bosnian, but said during the interview that she also felt Canadian:

> It's a hard [question]. First, I think I would identify myself as a Bosnian, because I was born in Bosnia, but now I also identify myself as a Canadian, because I've spent most of my life here, and I adopted a lot of values that are more Canadian than Bosnian. So I would say, I don't know if that's possible, but I am both—first Bosnian and then Canadian.

Melisa was born a few years before Yugoslavia fell apart and was not socialized into a Yugoslav identity. While for Sanela, Yugoslav identification represented a broader pan-ethnicity, for Melisa, her Canadian identity fills that space.

The Bosniak ethnic identity was officially adopted in 1993 when the Bosnian Muslim Assembly in Sarajevo decided to replace the ethnonym "Muslim" with "Bosniak" (Bošnjak)

(Merdjanova, 2013, p. 36). Also, Bosnian Serbs and Croats prefer their ethnic (Serbian, Croatian) to civic and geographic names (Bosnian). Most of my Bosnian Muslim participants arrived in Canada in the first half of the 1990s, when Bosniak identification was still being consolidated. As such, they had spent most their lives identifying, or being identified by the state, as "Muslims" and not "Bosniaks." Some spent years in refugee camps in Croatia and Slovenia before finally landing in Canada. Upon arrival in Canada, they were referred to in English as "Bosnians" and not "Bosniaks." This ethnic identification, however, was conveniently appropriated—as a geographic and civic one—by Bosnian Serbs and Croats who also found refuge in Canada in the 1990s. Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, touched on this boundary-crossing of Bosnian Serbs and Croats in Canada:

> When we came to Canada, we were in a terrible position as Muslims because, unlike Serbs and Croats, who went to Canadian churches and represented themselves as Bosnians and were helped by everyone, Muslims, Bosniaks, did not go to churches, were not helped. And for example, everyone, from the Mormons to all other Christians, would go to churches and pick up Serbs and Croats, take them places and help them and then they would talk about the wonderful time they had, unlike us who didn't receive this kind of help. Suddenly, they were Bosnians, among themselves they would say they were from Yugoslavia, but to outsiders they were Bosnians, unlike us.

These responses further indicate that ethnicity serves a different purpose in the lives of the Albanian and Bosnian participants. Ethnicity for the Albanians is a primordial, stable source not only of ethnic solidarity, but also of intra-ethnic inter-religious harmony; whereas for the Bosnians, it is a precarious source of identity, subject to manifold historical transformations, devoid of myths of religious tolerance, and susceptible to (mis)use by Bosnia's other ethno-religious groups.

Individual Religious Identifications

The question of ethnic origin was an easy question for the Albanian participants—they all simply declared being Albanian. Also, for all Albanians and most Bosnians, the response was uttered matter-of-factly and/or with pride. This was not the case, however, with the question of how they personally identify in the religious sense. In the questionnaire, the answers ranged from "practising Muslim," "born-Muslim," and "Muslim parents" to simply "Muslim" and "Islam." During the interviews, this question elicited detailed explanations about exactly what they mean when they say that they are Muslim. Most of the participants, uncertain whether "being Muslim" represented family background, or also included religious practices, adhered to the former definition. Some of them, however, also presented religious beliefs and practices as a question of personal choice.

Most of my Albania-born participants appeared uncertain about whether and to what extent to identify as Muslim. For instance, rather than saying she is Muslim, Besa said that her family comes from "Muslim origins." She also immediately distanced herself from her background: "But in Albania after the war we had 45 years of [communism]. . . when religion and everything was forbidden. It was in the background, but not that present in our lives." Later in the interview, Besa identified as "spiritual," as believing in "something," rather than being religious. She attributed her lack of identification with the Muslim faith to the fact that Albania forbad religion during communism. Besa thus questioned whether she met the criteria to be considered Muslim, since she grew up without religion and is still not religious. Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, echoed Besa's dilemma:

> Well, to be honest, I don't feel really connected to a religion, whichever that is, because . . . I'm a so-called Muslim, who never practised, never went into a mosque . . . [my wife] is half Muslim, half Orthodox, and our son is already

> baptized Catholic. So, I'm not really connected to a religion. I can call myself "none."

Ervin also referred to his parents as "so-called Muslims," and to himself as "officially Muslim." On the one hand, he feels that religious identification is inherited (even though he also distances his parents from Islam by referring to them as "so-called Muslims"); on the other hand, he also states that because of the state ban, he grew up "with no religion"—although he later indicated that he believes in God, but does not practise any religion. Ervin's comments thus illustrated both the ambivalence towards religion and the fluidity of religious boundaries among Albanians, as he stated, "My sister, she changed religion when she went into Greece, in 1990, she crossed the border, went into Greece, and the Greeks forced them to change their religion, so my sister changed her religion from so-called 'Muslim.'" While Ervin's sister was "forced" to change her religion, the fact that he refers to her as a "so-called Muslim" indicates that the change may not have been of great consequence. Another participant, Leka, exemplified how the interaction of religious background and religious practices (or a lack thereof) result in an uncertainty regarding religious identification:

> I was born in a family . . . Actually I'm Muslim, but not practising. My mother and father were Muslims.
>
> Ivana: Do you consider yourself Muslim?
>
> Leka: Yes.
>
> Ivana: So, when you're in a situation, sometimes people ask you or it just comes up, do you share, do you tell people that you're Muslim?
>
> Leka: For sure, yes. When people ask me, I say that I'm Muslim, but I'm not practising.

Finally, Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s who was born around the time that communism fell, answered to the "religious background" question in the questionnaire with the

response, “mother and father Muslim,” and stated that she does not practise Islam, although she “believes in God.”

Kosovo-born Albanian participants appeared more at ease to identify as Muslim, possibly a result of the fact that Kosovar Albanians are almost exclusively Muslim, and that religion played an important part in the construction of their collective identities. And yet, while participants from Kosovo did not problematize their Muslim identification, they also qualified it by elucidating exactly what kind of Muslims they were. For example, Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, indicated in the questionnaire that his religious background is Muslim and religious belief is “Islam.” However, in the interview, he repeatedly emphasized that, for him, being Muslim is “part of culture, tradition. Tradition we inherited from parents, they from their parents and so on.” Behar, a man from Kosovo in his 50s, likewise said, “I am Muslim, I am what I am. But I do not practise.”

Sami and Besim, both of whom came from Kosovo to Canada as refugees, were the only Albanian participants who said they practised Islam. However, the degree of religiosity appeared to affect their Muslim identification. While Sami identified as a practising Muslim, he also immediately added that he was “moderate.” Besim was the only practising Muslim in the whole sample who did not question his identification or qualify his response. He did, however, question if Muslims who do not practise are “real” Muslims:

> It’s very difficult, because when you say Muslim, Muslim can be anybody. When you say practicant, it’s different. You can say I am Muslim, and then go drink alcohol, eat what you want, go after women, cheat on [your] wife . . . I am sorry to say that but . . . Everybody can believe in God, but the point is, when you practise you are more scared of God, and when you don’t know, and you don’t practise, you can do anything. All the Muslims in the world who practise, who pray, are the same. Because they are scared of God, they know when they die they’ll go in front of God. But when you’re not a practicant and say you’re Muslim, just the meaning of the word Muslim is different because you go on the

> street, you cheat on your wife, you drink alcohol, you go the club, [do] a lot of bad things.

In contrast, my Bosnian respondents were less hesitant to refer to themselves as Muslims during the interviews, although this did not indicate their religiosity or their comfort identifying as Muslim in public. Similar to Albanian participants, their Muslim identification is anchored primarily in their family's religious background, customs, and traditions. What distinguishes Bosnian from Albanian Muslims is that, for the former, "Muslim" was a multifaceted category, encompassing religious, ethnic, and national identifications. This complexity was evident in my participants' responses, which varied depending on their current age and their age on arriving in Canada. Recall that Adela was born and raised in a multi-ethnic Bosnian town: she identifies as an atheist, refers to her parents as "communists," and describes herself and her peers as "Tito's pioneers," who believed in "brotherhood and unity." At the same time, Adela also refers to herself as Muslim (although, as we will see later, she no longer identifies as such in public), and does not eat pork. For her, "Muslim" is an ethnic rather than a religious identification. The tension between inherited and practised religion is also evident in the responses of Sanela, who came to Canada in the 1990s when she was in her 20s. She repeatedly stated that she was a "born-Muslim" who is not religious and does not practise Islam.

Melisa was born in Bosnia a few years before the fall of communism, and she came to Canada as child refugee in the 1990s. Because she was not socialized in Yugoslavia, her Muslim identification trajectory is somewhat simpler than Adela's. In Melisa's narratives—unlike those of Adela, Maja, and Sanela—references to communism and socialism are notably missing. Melisa nevertheless feels uncertain about what identifying as Muslim means. She says: "My parents are Muslim, I am considered Muslim." On the one hand, she feels that she is "considered Muslim" by virtue of her Muslim ancestry; on the other hand, her hesitation to state that she is

Muslim stems in part from the fact that she is not “very religious” (because religion was not part of her upbringing), but also in part from the fact that she has been socialized in Canada (Québec, to be precise) where “Muslim” has a different meaning than what she learned from her family.

Mirsada was the only Bosnian Muslim participant who declared her Muslim identity proudly and without qualifications, although, as noted earlier and will be elaborated on later, she attaches political and moral values to her ethno-religious group’s perceived indifference to religion—this despite her categorization of herself as a practising Muslim who prays, fasts, and does not eat pork.

“Mixed” Muslims

I also spoke with two Albania-born and two Bosnia-born participants of mixed Muslim and Christian backgrounds.[35] Like Albanian participants of Muslim-only background, the two mixed-origin Albanians emphasized that their families did not practise any religion. However, they expressed more pride in their religious backgrounds compared to the Muslim-only Albanians. Gentijana, an Albanian woman in her 40s whose father is Orthodox Christian and mother Muslim, says that the topic rarely comes up in Canada. When it does, she feels comfortable saying she is of Muslim and Orthodox Christian background. In the Balkans, similar to most places in the world, ethnic and religious identifications are typically passed on through the father via last names. As Mary Waters (1990) notes, surname is one of the principal cues of ethnicity: even if one does not identify with their paternal heritage, external categorization is expected to follow socially prescribed, patriarchal lines rather than personal preferences. It could be posited, then, that Gentijana’s comfort emerges from the fact that her father is Orthodox Christian, and

not Muslim. However, the story of Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s whose father is Muslim and mother Orthodox Christian and who also said she was proud of her mixed religious background, obscures this line of reasoning. When Vera talked about her experiences and memories of religion under communism, she also mentioned that her family did not practise—that "they were Muslims only by name." "They" referred to the whole family, including her Orthodox Christian mother, who acquired Vera's father's Muslim last name through marriage. Vera, nonetheless, said she feels proud and comfortable.

While the two Bosnian participants of mixed Muslim and Christian background did not explicitly express pride in their mixed religious backgrounds, they did say they comfortably identify as both. Both referred to themselves as Muslims throughout the interviews without adding any qualifications. Maja's father is a Catholic Croat and mother a Bosnian Muslim. She said that she reveals both her religious backgrounds "when confronted":

> I say that my father was Catholic, my mum is Muslim, a non-practising Muslim. She was a communist. So in my household we actually always celebrated Christmas and Easter. I'm more familiar with those, at least in our household. However, my other family, my grandma was celebrating Bajram [Eid] so I'm closely familiar with the Muslim religion as well.

While Maja reveals both her religious backgrounds and seems to treat them equally, she nevertheless qualifies her mother's religious background. Maja explains that her Muslim mother was a non-practising Muslim—a communist, in fact. The statements of the irrelevance of religion in her mother's life speak more broadly to her personal values. Earlier in the interview, Maja reduced her Muslim mother's religious background to merely a biological fact by referring

---

[35] Merdjanova (2013, p. 88) cites reports that 27% of all marriages in Bosnia before 1991 were mixed, and that intermarriage in Albania is not only widespread, but an evidence of "unique interreligious tolerance."

to her as "Muslim, kind of, by birth." Similar to Adela and Sanela, who identify as Muslim "by birth" or "born-Muslim," Maja sees her mother's Muslim identification as something bequeathed to her and not a result of choice. Maja did not apply this kind of qualification to her Croat Catholic father, whom she referred to only as "Catholic." It is possible too that the topic of the interview—being Muslim, not Catholic, in Canada—led to this kind of word choice and more detailed explanations. Nevertheless, regardless of whether this reflects Maja's parents' self-identification or is how Maja chose to describe them, the "kind of, by birth" phrase is in line with the other participants' accounts that minimize and dilute their Muslim backgrounds via qualifications such as "so-called," "official," "born-Muslim," and "Muslim by birth."

Religious Beliefs and Practices

The previous section examined the question of ethnic and religious identification. While it touched on the religious beliefs and practices of some of the participants, this section tackles this issue in more detail. The question of beliefs and practices was more a sociological than a theological question. I asked it because I wanted to ascertain if and how participants' beliefs and practices affected their religious identifications, value judgments and personal boundaries. The questionnaire asked participants to describe their religious beliefs in their own terms. A few participants answered the questionnaire orally. The same question was also part of the interview. I allowed participants to describe their beliefs and practices in their own terms. I did not interrogate them about specific religious practices (e.g. if and how often they pray, eat pork, drink alcohol, fast during Ramadan, observe Eid etc.). Instead, I let them mention what they thought was important. They would also often mention their beliefs and practices (or a lack thereof) as part of responses to other questions.

Some participants said that their present religious beliefs and practices, or lack thereof, are a result of socialization in a communist state; others emphasized that they were a result of personal choice. Most of the participants reported either that they were not religious or that they believed in God, but did not practise Islam. Of the latter, some said they celebrated Eid, and four participants mentioned they do not eat pork. One participant said he *was* religious but does *not* practise Islam. Three participants mentioned that they practised Islam, albeit to different degrees. Three participants identified as atheists, and one of them said she does not eat pork.

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, was the only participant in the sample who stated that he practises Islam without adding any qualifications. Besim said that he was not religious when he lived in Kosovo, or in his first ten years in Canada: "Before that I would just say I am Muslim, but saying that is not enough." Muslim identification became an identity when his first child was born:

> When I saw my wife giving birth I was surprised, and the pain she had giving birth, and when I saw my daughter getting out, I was happy, but I was crying. I was saying, "Oh God, you are merciful, only you can do this, no one else." So I started reading the Quran, and the Quran explains everything, from the beginning when the baby starts, you know, and the steps until birth. You're reading and freezing at the same time. This was explained 1,400 years ago, you know. And I didn't even know how to pray, you know, but right away I checked on the internet how they pray and . . . My wife started practising at the same time.

Today, Besim practises his faith by praying five times a day at home, work, or wherever he finds himself at prayer time. He also does not drink, gamble, or go clubbing. His religiosity is firmly attached to specific moral values: "I want to be a good man, a good father, a good neighbour for everybody." In fact, for Besim, the only relevant boundary between Muslims lies in religiosity, and not in their ethnicity or nationality: "To say 'I am Muslim,' it doesn't mean you are a real

Muslim, you know. You can believe in God, I know, but if you don't practise, it's like half . . . When you start practising, then you understand really what it means to be a practicant."

Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, identified as a "moderate Muslim, not radical, like very strict. I am a Muslim from Europe, what can I say." In describing his religious practice, he told me: "Oh, yes, absolutely yes I do [practise]. Actually Ramadan, sometimes I fast, if I don't jeopardize my job, obviously, but I do practise Ramadan, and other events, as much as I can, from our religion." Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, also mentioned in passing that she practises Islam, prays, does not eat pork, and fasts during Ramadan. Interestingly, as noted earlier, both Sami and Mirsada, who say that they do practise religion, also characterize Albanian and Bosnian Muslims in general as open-minded and liberal as a result of their general indifference to religion.

As described earlier, Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, identifies as "Muslim, but not practising." His trajectory was opposite to that of Leka: he used to practise, but does not anymore:

> I was a practicant when I was a little boy, when I was 11 or 12, where I used to live, my house was close to a mosque; then we moved to another city, I even moved to another city for my studies, so I forgot a little bit of my religion.
>
> Ivana: Are you religious still?
>
> Leka: Yes, for sure.

Although he considers himself religious, Leka also repeatedly emphasized that he does not practise and that he only go to mosque on the last day of Ramadan:

> Whenever it is Ramadan, to the last day . . . I go to a mosque to say a prayer . . . and last July when it was Ramadan, I was invited by someone here into a mosque, and I said a prayer for the last day. I still remember the prayers, how to pray.

Other Albanian participants said that they do not practise Islam, but do observe Eid:

> We don't. I do observe Eid; I don't observe Ramadan any longer. I'd done it when I was in Kosovo, so I used to fast. Here I find it very difficult to do so, simply because I work. I'm a mother, you know, the household and everything else, I find it very difficult to do so. When it's Eid, I do the traditional things we do in terms of dessert, big meal, and that kind of stuff. But really, is it just because of Eid, or do I do it for [the sake of] festivities? [Regardless], I do it. (Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s)

Gentijana, an Albanian woman in her 40s with an Orthodox Christian and Muslim background, says she believes in God, does not practise any religion, but does but celebrate religious holidays. Other Albanian participants said that they believe in God or are spiritual, but without mentioning any specific religious practices. Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s who is of Muslim and Orthodox Christian background, also told me that her belief in God is unanchored in a specific faith: "At this very moment, I just believe in God. It doesn't matter how that God is called, Jesus Christ or Mohammed or Buddha, I just believe in God." Likewise, Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, said: "I'm not really connected to a religion. I can call myself 'none'." Besa, an Albanian woman in her 40s, described her beliefs as follows: "I sure believe in something bigger, something other than the people around us and everything might exist. I have difficulty to identify with a religion or something, so spirituality might be something that I identify with." In the questionnaire, prior to the interview, Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, indicated his religious background as Muslim and religious belief as "Islam." This initially led me to believe that he was a practising Muslim. During the interview, however, he said that he "does not practise and never has" and that he feels Canadian, Albanian, and then Muslim: "The religion, it comes in third, because it has no bearing on my life." Arsim has three adult children. The eldest came to Canada at the age of seven, and Arsim describes him as a Canadian who has absolutely no interest in religion and does not identify as Muslim in public. Arsim's adult daughter identifies as spiritual, which, according to him, "has nothing to do with religion."

Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, said that neither her grandparents nor her parents are religious. She said that she visited a mosque once as a child and does not remember. Like Arsim, who used the consumption of alcohol as an example of irreligiosity, Melisa, albeit more indirectly, problematized the link between morality and religiously proscribed dietary practices and religion in general:

> I'm not sure that I believe in, like, all this God and all that, because the way our parents raised us is that, as my mom says it in Bosnian "*grijeh nije ono što mećeš u usta već što izlazi iz usta*" [Sin does not enter through your mouth, sin comes out of your mouth],[36] so we've been raised like that. So for me religion was never a deal-breaker, and being in Canada, there is a lot of diversity and so, it brought to my background more openness to other religions as well. So I would say that I'm more, like, be a nice person and don't do bad things to others, and respect others. But all this part, God and all that, I'm not sure I believe in these things.

Sanela, a Bosnian woman in her 40s, briefly described her religious belief as she was filling out the questionnaire: "religious belief—hardly any . . . I don't know, I believe in something but really I don't call it anything." She added, "My parents are Muslims. Sometimes they fast during Ramadan. My father drinks, if he fasts, he doesn't drink, and all other times he drinks." Sanela refers to herself as "born-Muslim" and explained,

> It means I [do] not actually [practice] anything—I drink, I do not really fast, [I am] not covered, not by all these religious beliefs what Muslim means Muslim. I'm just born, not practising it, born in a family that is actually from an Islamic background, Muslim background.

Sanela also mentioned that she does not eat pork—but only because she is not used to it. She also occasionally goes to a "Bosnian centre" that also operates as a mosque. Sanela told me that the

---

[36] Recall that Maja said that her Muslim grandmother would tell her a similar version of the proverb: "Evil does not go into you, evil comes out of you."

Centre organizes events for Women's Day and Mother's Day, as well as that she participates in fundraising for Syrian refugees: This illustrates how the religious and the cultural interact:

> Trudeau brought them last year, I don't know how many families from Syria—some of the families went through the Bosnian centre as well. Some like me and a few families collected everything necessary for one family to have a start in Canada, which means from dishes, to the pillows, covers, some clothes and stuff. So that also went to the Bosnian centre . . . I like actually helping people because I know it's hard to start on your own in a different country when you're not really an immigrant, but a refugee . . .
>
> Ivana: You related to the plight of Syria refugees . . .
>
> Sanela: I didn't care whether they are Muslims or Catholic; it didn't matter to me at all.

Recall the participant who spent a night in a prison in Zagreb, Croatia, because she had refused to obtain the refugee card that, as a Muslim refugee from Bosnia, she was required to have. Resentful at being labelled as and persecuted for something she neither identified with nor believed in, this participant decided to explore Islam "out of spite." Ultimately, however, she said she made a *choice* not to be religious:

> I think it would also be my choice in the end whether I wanted to, because I could have pursued Islam, and saying that I'm intelligent enough I could choose to actually practise it and I have read a lot on Islam, and I learnt how to pray in 1992 [after the green card incident] . . . and at that moment I said, "Now I'm going to learn everything that's possible." I could have chosen to be either way, to become really religious because of that or because of my own desire to become religious, but I never did. I think it was just spite, so at that moment it was just because . . . I think there was more of a disconnect that I can't believe that these things are happening to . . . Why would God actually all let it happen, why would we all suffer this way?

Another participant described her brother's religious trajectory:

> Ivana: When you said [your brother] is Muslim now, what did he consider himself to be before?
>
> A: Nothing.
>
> Ivana: What was his evolution?

> A: It was just like me. He was never [religious]. I think even now I know more about Islam than he does. But because he is married into a Muslim family and his wife is a practising Muslim, i.e. he doesn't drink during Ramadan and drinks on every other occasion . . . He respects her rules, he respects no alcohol in the house during Ramadan, and they don't eat pork at the house during Ramadan. My brother started not eating pork at one point, even when he's not in the house, but he changed now—he will eat pork if he goes outside, just not in the house. It kind of bothered me little bit because I know that he doesn't know anything about it. But I think he's really doing this just out of respect for his wife, which is nice. And again, it's his life. When he comes in my house, we have my rules.

Finally, three participants reported being atheists. Maja is one of them. Recall that she said that she had been largely unaware of the existence of religions until Yugoslavia fell apart in 1991 and the war broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992. She witnessed "nationality," ethnicity, and religious background, as she perceived it— "suddenly" —become the most important social markers. In order to adjust to this new reality, Maja studied both Muslim and Catholic religions for a few years. However, in the end, she settled on being an atheist:

> I guess I was just old enough at that time and educated in a different way to believe in evolution, to have that kind of critical thinking. It just didn't sit with me well; the message and the stories that were told by religion were kind of already against my beliefs.

Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, who is of Muslim and Christian Orthodox origins, also identifies as both Muslim and atheist. She explained these double, seemingly contradictory, identifications:

> What I found has worked the best is sort of evoking the Jewish example—people often know you can be Jewish and not religious, and you can be a Jewish and an atheist. And from then on I explained how in Bosnia and Herzegovina being a Muslim is an ethnic identity, not a religious one necessarily, and so this is how you can be both a Muslim and an atheist.

Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, likewise refers to herself as both Muslim and atheist. She attributes her atheism to having spent most of her life in a communist state: "Above all, due to the system we grew up in, because it was a socialist, and essentially communist system, my

parents were communists . . . Darwinism was taught in our schools and we grew up believing in Darwin's theory of evolution." Adela said that during the 1990s war in Bosnia she briefly started believing in God out of fear, and because the Muslim identity was imposed upon her. However, she says that her experience in a concentration camp led her to abandon her newly found faith and re-embrace atheism. It is interesting that Adela celebrates Eid and does not eat pork or drink alcohol, although the latter may not be because of religious traditions. She told me that her children also do not eat pork. Her case debunks the assumptions that religiosity is always tied to religious identification, or that religious practices are necessarily based on religiosity or religious identification.

Albanians and Religious Fluidity

Several authors have argued that conversions across religious lines, and Catholicism in particular, have historically been attractive to Albanians (e.g. Merdjanova, 2013). A few participants referred to this fluidity of religious boundaries. Besa mentioned that after the fall of communism, many people explored religion out of curiosity and converted from Islam to Christianity, and vice versa. Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, mentioned that she had heard of people who had converted from Islam to Catholicism in the late 1980s. Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, said that his wife and daughter, all of whom are of Muslim descent, have "typical Catholic names." Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, gave a personal account of his family's religious fluidity. While he is "so-called Muslim," his wife is half Muslim, half Orthodox Christian. They arrived in Québec in the 2000s with their two young children. Ervin told me that their older child was baptized in a Catholic church prior to immigrating to Canada:

> Before we left Albania, [our friends] were saying, "Oh, you're going to Canada, so Canada is Catholic religion, so if you want, baptize your kid Catholic," and we are in the middle of deciding, so one of [my wife's] cousins became the godmother, and then we baptized the son Catholic.

Even though their children went to public school, Ervin remarked that “the public schools here in Québec are more oriented to Catholicism.” Interestingly, their adolescent daughter, who was a toddler when the family came to Québec, has expressed interest in getting baptized in a Catholic church:

> She also wants to get baptized, but as you know, right now it takes at least a year. You have to go to those conventions and so on . . . And [being a teenager], she doesn’t know what to do with her life, it was just her wish, but nothing happened after that, because [my wife] gave her the options, we have to go to a church, we have to follow all the procedures there, and she never did it.

On the one hand, Ervin’s account illustrates the fluidity and pragmatic character of his family’s attitude towards religion: even though the children are primarily of Muslim background, the parents decided to heed the advice of friends back in Albania and baptize their son Catholic in order to help him integrate and adjust better to the primarily Catholic-origin Canada and Québec. I, however, cannot help but wonder if the desire of a predominantly Albanian Muslim-background teenager to be baptized Catholic is somehow related to living in the predominantly Catholic-origin Québec, which has grappled with how to accommodate its Muslim minority populations more than any other Canadian province.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the participants talked about how they perceive their ethno-religious groups, and who *they* were as individuals. They revealed how their religious and ethnic identifications, beliefs, and practices have evolved over time and across various geographic and political spaces. They have lived through turbulent times and in dramatically different social systems. They all experienced communism, and many lived through wars and post-communist social transition to democracy. They all, finally, immigrated and integrated into Canadian society. Their ethnic and religious identification, beliefs, and practices followed these dynamic, and often traumatic,

experiences and changes. The trajectory of their ethnic and religious identification and practices has been marked by an interplay of impositions and choices. These were impositions primarily of their home states (through communism, and ethnic "others" during the 1990s wars), but also, as will be shown in the chapters that follow, of Canada's dominant cultural repertoires. Their choices to identify, believe, and practice—or not—have been inevitably constrained by these impositions.

This chapter showed that Albanian participants take great pride in their ethnic group's multifaith, secular character. They all extensively exploited the cultural repertoire of "Albanianism," as argued earlier—the quintessential "cultural stuff" (Barth, 1969) of Albanian nationhood. Participants resorted to ethnic mythology to blur and transcend intra-ethnic religious and regional differences, foreground ethnicity at the expense of religion(s), signal similarity of the key symbol of Albanian nationhood to Canadian multiculturalism, and thereby implicitly distinguish themselves from other Muslim ethnic groups. Most of the participants constructed religion as transient and unstable—it was, in the words of one participant, first "imposed" onto Albanians during Ottoman times, taken away during communism, and restored after communism fell. At the same time, religion was presented as optional and a result of personal choice, in contrast to Albanian ethnicity, which was constructed as primordial, at least in part because it is perceived as constant over time and across space.

I did not observe this sense of ethnic security among my Bosnian participants. First, as noted earlier, the ethnic identification of Bosnian Muslims has endured many transformations over the past hundred years. Unlike Albanian participants, who view their ethnicity as primordial and stable, the ethnicity of Bosnian Muslims has been claimed and reclaimed multiple times over the course of a historically short period of time. One participant's multiple ethnic

identifications—Yugoslav, ex-Yugoslav, Bosnian, Bosniak—illustrate the absence of comfort with ethnicity that I observed among Albanian participants. The preference in English, and most other languages, for “Bosnian” over “Bosniak” in reference to Bosnian Muslims compounds things further. As one participant stated, non-Muslims from Bosnia, who also share the mother tongue, have conveniently shifted in and out a Bosnian identity in order to obtain various societal benefits. Second, as the result of a history of inter-ethnic conflicts among Bosnia’s ethnic groups, Bosnian participants have no recourse to a strategy comparable to Albanianism. A few participants found parallels to Canadian national repertoire of tolerance and diversity in Yugoslavia’s state mantra of “Brotherhood and Unity.” However, they referred to the slogan only as a dim and distant memory, one that was betrayed by the 1990s conflicts. Also, judging by the continuing inter-ethnic tensions in Bosnia, as well as the firm boundaries between immigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina of Muslim, Orthodox, and Catholic origins in former Yugoslavia’s diasporas, the slogan belongs to a bygone era, and likely will not resurrect anytime soon.

This chapter also showed that most of the participants drew boundaries from their religious origins. They did so by identifying personally, or identifying the ethno-religious group as non-religious, non-practising, or generally indifferent towards religion, as well as by making references to other, primarily Middle Eastern Muslims. This distancing from religious identification and religion was expressed through variety of discursive boundary-making strategies, primarily qualifications. While participants displayed varying degrees of comfort identifying as Muslim, most qualified their Muslimness to some extent. My Albania-born participants in particular grappled with whether and to what extent to identify as Muslims. They grew up in communist Albania, where religion was banned and the state employed coercive

methods to impose Albanianism by, among other means, arranging interreligious marriages. In the post-communist period, the new Albanian state heavily promoted secularism. In contrast, the Kosovar Albanian participants felt more at ease identifying as Muslim. This is due at least to three factors: Yugoslavia's more relaxed attitude towards religion; the religious homogeneity of Kosovar Albanians; and the fact that religious differences served as the basis for communal disidentification from the Serbs, who are Orthodox Christians. Finally, unlike with their ethnic identification, my Bosnian participants appeared most at ease identifying as Muslims (although this was not reflected in their religious beliefs and practices). The ease in personally identifying as Muslim can be partially traced to the fact that between the Austro-Hungarian rule and the break-up of Yugoslavia, "Muslim" was a religious, ethnic, and national category all at once. "Muslim" in itself implied nothing in particular about a person's religious beliefs and practices.

Religious boundaries that participants drew ranged from dietary (primarily alcohol, and to a lesser extent, pork consumption) to dress (mainly, not wearing head coverings). Participants also described themselves as espousing "Western values," such as gender equality and general tolerance and openness towards others. These, however, were represented as functions of religion and religiosity, and can therefore be also understood as religious boundaries. When providing examples of their indifference towards religion, participants often compared themselves to other Muslims in order to illustrate the points mentioned above. Arabic Muslims in particular served as yardsticks against which Albanian and Bosnian Muslims defined their "atypical" Muslimness.

Chapter 7

How Do “Others” See “Us”? Religious and Racial External Categorizations

While the previous chapter focused on participants’ understandings and trajectories of who they are as Albanian and Bosnian Muslims, the following chapters branch out into the realm of everyday interactions and boundary-making strategies in the Canadian context. The previous chapter looked inward to examine how participants identify personally in terms of ethnicity and religion. This chapter looks outward and considers the interactive process of identification–reaction–feeling–response. It examines how participants think they are seen externally. It asks how they have identified publicly, how others have reacted to their public identification, and how they have felt about and/or responded to others’ reactions. As argued in Chapter 3, it is in part through everyday encounters with Muslims and non-Muslims that participants acquire understanding of who they are as Albanians, Bosnians, and Muslims in Canada, and what their position is on the Canadian social ladder. This chapter shows that, while my participants have experienced the stigma of being Muslim, especially in the arena of day-to-day interactions, they have also benefitted from the general public’s unfamiliarity with Muslims, as well as from, often gendered, racial privilege.

Identifying as Muslim in Public

The previous chapter showed that, while most of the participants identify as Muslims, most also draw boundaries from their religious descent, mainly by emphasizing that they are not religious or do not practise Islam. Given the hesitation of most of them to unqualifiedly self-identify as Muslim, the questions of whether they identify as such in public, and how they feel as they announce their identities, were pertinent.

The findings reflect the narratives from the previous chapter: while most participants openly identify as Muslim in public, many also qualify their identifications. Albanian participants in particular anchored their comfort in their ethnicity and the cultural repertoire of Albanianism. The Bosnian participants, including those who are atheists, were more likely to state that they unreservedly publicly identify as Muslims, often for political reasons. A few participants reported feeling uncomfortable identifying as Muslims in public. One said she does not do so anymore. Several participants said they knew of people who do not publicly disclose their religious origins. Their discomfort is couched mainly in the dominant cultural repertoire of Islamophobia and Muslim stereotypes.

Most of my Albanian participants modified their comfort identifying as Muslim in public, mainly by deflecting to their ethnicity. This is how Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, responded when asked whether he identifies as Muslim in public:

> Well, I never kept it hidden . . . I'm proud of, and will be . . . I'm really proud to show these people here, especially Canadians, not Europeans, because Europeans know more history than Canadians, what I achieved, not only me, but my family, wife and kids, and not to be nationalist, I still hang the Albanian flag on my car, like any other nationality does, because bottom line is this country here, Canada, even US or Northern America, is made by us—not by us Albanians, but Europeans, Balkans people, Mediterranean people, so I really have no issue with that.

Ervin's comfort publicly identifying as Muslim is couched in his pride that he is an *Albanian* Muslim. Similarly, Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, said,

> I say that people in Albania they are Christian, and Orthodox, and Muslim, like I say, 67 or 70% of Albanians are Muslim. There are also Orthodox and Catholics and Bekhtashian and . . . We have four different religions there in Albania.

Leka does not simply say that he is proud—the multifaith character of his homex country and ethnic group defines and contextualizes his Muslimness.

Other participants ascribed indifference towards religion as part of their public identification as Muslims. Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, said that she does not hide that she is Muslim, but immediately emphasized that her practice is private:

> To be honest with you, I don't hide the fact that I'm a Muslim. I feel comfortable enough that if somebody, if the topic comes up, I feel comfortable enough to say that I am. Do I go to mosque? No I don't. I didn't go when I was in Kosovo. Do I say a prayer every now and then? Yes, I do. Does my daughter know we're Muslims? Yes, she does.

Like Leka, Anila feels comfortable saying she is Muslim, but the public identification is followed by a qualification that she is not a practising Muslim. While Anila emphasizes she could choose not to publicly identify as Muslim ("Can people know I'm a Muslim or not? No, right?"), she refuses to go down that road: "I say that I am Muslim. I don't hide the fact that I'm Muslim, because I don't agree with stereotyping." Anila thus adds a political component to her public identification: although she does not fit the image of a "typical Muslim woman," Anila, by publicly identifying as Muslim, seeks to disrupt the myth of Muslims as a monolith. Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, likewise proudly and purposefully identifies as Muslim in public in order to destabilize the prevalent image of Muslims: "I do it on purpose. I don't flaunt it, 'I am this and that.' But if someone asks me, I tell them who and what I am."

It is unclear if the objective of these participants' political public identifications is to "humanize" all Muslims, or to distinguish Albanian and Bosnian from other Muslims. In contrast, Nina's public identification as Muslim clearly serves to both humanize all Muslims, and to call out hypocrisy among non-Muslims. Even though she is an atheist of mixed Muslim-Christian origins, Nina "comes out" as Muslim specifically to challenge anti-Muslim remarks:

> It doesn't seem like outright racism, usually the things that they said, but it's more something about how they don't understand this particular religion or that's just the way that it is, and the religion doesn't allow women to do this and

> that. So usually I start out by responding that I'm a Muslim and I feel like I'm allowed to do a lot of things, and that the same problems can be found in another religions, like Christianity . . . those are typically the situations where I come out and say "I'm a Muslim," and I usually shut them up.

As noted in the previous chapter, I observed that the other participants of mixed Muslim and Orthodox Christian origins did not qualify their religious origins using ethnicity, homeland national narratives, or (ir)religiosity. For instance, Vera proudly declared both of these religious origins: "Well, I'm proud to be what I am, I can't change that . . ." Maja likewise says she claims both origins and does "not feel uncomfortable at all." Unlike participants who say they feel comfortable, but nonetheless qualify their Muslimness, these participants' "inherent mixedness" speaks for itself. As argued in the previous chapter, it is possible that the presence of a Christian origin "dilutes" the mixed participants' Muslimness to some degree. Unlike the "Muslim-only" participants who feel they need to add information to "weaken" their Muslimness, the mixed-origin participants' Christian side may perform that role.

Several participants reported feeling uncomfortable identifying as Muslim in public. Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, said her discomfort is rooted in the disconnect between how she sees herself and how other people imagine Muslims:

> To be honest, it's not a pleasant feeling because I feel like it has a negative connotation. Not that I don't respect it, absolutely not, it's just when people say [Muslim], they mean something else. That's how I feel at least . . . With the recent things, and with the recent media exposure to that, particularly religion, I think people have Islamophobia, so when they say [Muslim], I think they are referring to something negative, you know.

Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, echoed Ariana's insights. Melisa modifies her discomfort by adding that she is not religious:

> I say it all the time, whenever the subject comes up, I say it, my parents are Muslim, I am considered Muslim, but I'm not [religious]. I feel the need to say, to always justify that I'm not very religious, because whey you say you're Muslim, they think "Oh my God," with all the terrorists and all that.

Besa said she publicly identifies her Muslim origin only when asked directly:

> Even, if I'm really open—I have nothing to hide and I'm not judgmental [about] other religions—I kind of hesitate to say it and I have the need to say, "It's different with me," like I need to add information. And even if they don't ask me directly, I won't mention it and I find that kind of weird and not very nice of me. . . But it's not the only reason. I've told you, I'm not really identifying with [Islam] . . . So is it worthy to open a discussion on something, because I'm not religious or in general Muslim or other things? But I do hesitate, if I'm not asked directly.

These accounts point to a dissonance between the public image of Muslims, and how these participants see themselves. The moment they reveal they are Muslim, or of Muslim background, Ariana, Besa, and Melisa assume that the other person accesses their personal database of Muslims, what Goffman (1959) referred to as "previous experience" or "untested stereotypes" (p. 1). This information is presumed to be negative, assuming Muslims hold anti-Western values and support terrorism (ostensibly often committed in the name of religion). Identifying as Muslim in public thus carries the social risk of being associated with *religious* Muslims, and, by extension, anti-Western values and terrorism. Like some of the other participants, both Besa and Melisa feel the need to add information that will disrupt these social expectations and assumptions. Since they are aware that Islam and religious Muslims are perceived as linked to anti-Western values and terrorism, the logical qualification that would separate participants from this image is to say that they are not religious. This information serves to differentiate Besa and Melisa from the image they presume the other person has of them—the image these participants do not identify with. Besa, however, says she feels uneasy about her own discomfort:

> It's not very nice. Like "Why should I hesitate," you know, it's kind of not a very nice part, you know, of the situation. Why should I hide that? Well, not hide, but why should I hesitate, why should I need to add more information?"

When asked, Besa and Melisa tell the truth about their religious origins. And yet, they have mixed feelings: Besa is unsure if she even identifies as Muslim; Melisa does, but she does not

practise the Muslim faith. Besa would prefer to feel proud of who she is, but social reality forces her to qualify her background in order not to be confused with the "bad Muslims." She considers herself a nice, likeable person, and throughout the interview credited her bubbly personality for her successful navigation of the experiences of immigration in Greece and Canada. Besa worries that coming out as Muslim could make people think less of her, or inadvertently associate her with values foreign to her. While Besa is aware that the people she is interacting with may not necessarily stereotype Muslims, she does not want to take the risk and hence dissociates herself—just in case. She also added, "I never had to justify myself for being Albanian or from [the] Balkans, but I had the same [negative] feeling if people had to ask me about religion." Unlike Ervin, whose Muslimness is buffered by his Albanianness, for Besa, the two identities are separate.

Other participants referred to similar feelings of discomfort while identifying as Muslims in public. Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, says that she used to do so. When in interacting with "Canadians," she would highlight similarities between Bosnian and Canadian customs in order to blur boundaries with the mainstream society and integrate into her workplace. However, she eventually came to realize that that it was an uphill battle not worth fighting:

> Initially I thought that I could change opinions by explaining, educating, showing that our culture, tradition, customs are not too different from the Canadian. Or I would bring food or tell them something about my country, the monuments, culture, cultural heritage. Then I would see them just looking at each other. What I saw and what they saw did not match. So I realized later, when I started another job, that it is better not to say anything. So now I often hear their comments and often laugh. When I tried educating them, it did not work. Then they wouldn't talk about [Muslims] anymore [in front of me].

Today, Adela feels that revealing her religious background at her new place of work would come at the expense of her reputation: "They see me as different anyway, because of my accent, the

way I dress, my behaviour—as an immigrant, you are simply different. If they knew, the gap would be deeper." One Bosnian participant told me that on the day of 9/11, her mother came home crying because she was subjected to anti-Muslim comments (in Quebec City):

> We arrived here in the 1990s, so before it was fine, we were integrating and all that, but after 9/11 and after I saw her coming from work crying, it really hurt me to see her like that and to see reactions of people. Because she is the nicest person that I know, and how can you judge someone . . . They were just saying, not directly to her, but it hurt her in a way, because they were saying bad things about Muslims, about terrorists . . . And that really hurt her . . . So I think at that moment I realized the impact of saying that you're Muslim.

As a result of the expressions of anti-Muslim sentiments, her mother no longer publicly identifies as Muslim:

> Even now she still feels that, as a Muslim, she's been judged, and she doesn't wear any scarf or anything like that but she still feels that people can be mean and she doesn't . . . She gets it but . . . It's harder for her . . . She never says that she's a Muslim. She keeps it to herself. Even now, she takes some English classes, and she is in the class with people from Iraq, Somalia and they are covered, and she says it to them, I think, but she doesn't say out loud, to others, if they don't ask.

Finally, Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, also said she has a friend who "if she could, she would totally forget she is Muslim. She tells her nieces, 'Don't say anything, just say that you are Canadian.' There are people who feel disenchanted. I don't think she would agree to be interviewed."

In a recent study, Nagra (2017) found that, in response to rising Islamophobia, young Canadian Muslims embraced Islam and found comfort in their religion. Indeed, the degree to which one identifies with a (stigmatized) religion affects their destigmatization strategies. While many practising Muslims contest the mainstream meanings of "Muslim" by emphasizing the peaceful character of their faith, non-practising Muslims in this study are more likely to dissociate themselves from it. Besim, a practising Muslim from Kosovo in his mid-30s, referred

to this difference in the way one copes when he told me that practising and not-practising Muslims deal with Islamophobia differently:

> I have Albanian friends from Albania. Those who are practicants, real Muslims, they don't hide, they talk about how hard it is over there, people suffering from corruption, you know. They don't hide things. But with people who are not practicants, okay, they are Muslims, but . . . They hide, they are not practicants. Because people who don't practise, they hide things, because they are scared. They don't even want to talk about it.

The factors that influence comfort levels in publicly identifying as Muslim include personality traits, age at arrival in Canada, current age, religiosity, socio-economic status, and political views. I observed that those who identify as Muslims in order to disrupt stereotypes are also those who are of higher social status and describe themselves as confident. While Anila and Mirsada, both educated professionals with successful careers, do personally identify as Muslims, they also feel that their status in Canada is secure enough that they can "risk" coming out as Muslim in order to dispel stereotypes. Maja and Nina displayed similar comfort. As highly educated, politically aware, and also religiously mixed women, they feel accomplished enough that they do not fear any social ramifications from identifying as Muslim in public. Since they feel it cannot cause (significant) personal damage, they use public identification as a tool of social justice.

Those participants who feel uncomfortable identifying as Muslim question their Muslimness to some degree. Their social status may also not be secure enough to publicly or proudly declare their Muslim background. Besa does not practise Islam and does not identify as Muslim. She is also still in the process of establishing herself in Canada. Ariana likewise distances herself from the religion. She has been in Canada for less than ten years and is a recent university graduate. For her, it is a battle not worth fighting. Like many Bosnian Muslims, Melisa nominally identifies as Muslim, but feels no connection to the religion. Like Nina, she

grew up in Canada and possesses more social and human capital than participants who arrived later in life. However, she is not as politically-minded and feels unsure about how to combat Islamophobia. Finally, Adela, unable to transfer the university and professional credentials earned in Bosnia, has held administrative positions. As a refugee who arrived in Canada in her mid-30s, she feels undervalued and unaccomplished. She is also an atheist. For Adela, it would seem entirely unnecessary to jeopardize her precarious social status by publicly identifying as a member of the currently most mistrusted social group.

External Categorizations: "Appearance" as a Religious Identifier

I asked participants how others—Muslims and non-Muslims—have reacted to their publicly identifying as Muslim, and how the participants have responded to and felt about the others' reactions. Almost all participants said other people were surprised to hear they were Muslim. Most participants said the surprise was due to their appearance, or behaviour. Most interpreted the reactions as due to a lack of knowledge about Muslims in general and of their home countries. Albanian women and men differed in one important aspect: skin colour. Albanian women were more likely to resort to gendered repertoires, specifically choices about head coverings, makeup, and style of clothing. Not having these options, Albanian men more readily interpreted the surprise as due to their skin tone. Unlike the Albanian women, my Bosnian participants (all women) more readily combined racial and gender religious markers to account for other people's surprised reactions.

Most of the participants said that they encountered surprise in reaction to their appearance. The image of what a "typical Muslim" looks like is rooted in the general public's unfamiliarity with the geographical, cultural, and racial heterogeneity of Muslims:

> I personally don't know much [about the] religion, but my background is Muslim, and I had some of my colleagues were, like, "Oh really? You don't

> look like . . . I would never say you come from a Muslim background." So I had to explain to them a little bit what kind of background it used to be in Albania and everything, and they were kind of surprised. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

Besa says that these surprised reactions were underpinned by distinct gendered/religious and racial social expectations:

> Usually they see [Muslim] women [as] oppressed and wearing scarves . . . and I'm kind of a coquette. I'm almost always dressed up, with makeup and things, and open-minded as a person, and I am really outgoing and talking to people and everything. And that has nothing to do with religion or whatever, but probably people see that differently from what's being represented.

When questioned further, Besa said that skin colour may in part account for the surprise, although she insists that her clothing and personality style are probably the main reasons: "Yes, probably, the physical part, but also the presentation part. I told you I like being dressed up, and things like that, probably, also don't match with the presentation, I guess." Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, first said that the surprise (of a presumably non-Muslim person, given the "I am just like you" remark below) came from the fact that she is not covered:

> I've had one reaction again at work, where my employee actually, that said: "Oh my God, you are?!" So I looked at her and said, "Yeah, is there a . . . why do you say that?" "Because you don't look like a Muslim." "So, what does a Muslim look like to you? What are you looking for to see?" "You know, covered, with a hijab, possibly with" . . . I don't know what's that called—the overcoat, the long ones—I don't know what they're called. So I said, "No, not all the Muslims have the same tradition. We in Kosovo don't have those traditions." Was my grandmother covered? Yes. However, my mother is not, my aunt and cousins and whatever are not. I'm just like you.

Anila first attributes the surprise to the fact that she is not covered. As with Besa, she casually adds skin colour as a possible reason for people's reaction only after I asked if it was a possibility: "No, I think those that are surprised are surprised because I'm not covered and I'm white . . . I think it's more being covered, not the colour of my skin."

My male Albanian participants also encountered surprise from people when they publicly revealed that they were Muslim. Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, recalls identifying as a Muslim in a public situation: "Everyone looked at me weird, because there are misconceptions among Canadians. Why? Because they don't know, they never read about Muslims." He initially interpreted this situation as due to lack of knowledge:

> When I say that I am Muslim, I get "How come?"—because sometimes we drink, and because I drink, I cannot be Muslim, because among Muslims you shouldn't drink, you shouldn't cheat—and I say, "I've done all those things!" They have misconceptions, first, because when it comes to Muslims from Kosovo, Balkans in general, they think you should have a beard, you have to be all hairy, be a conservative, be bad according to some kind of model, which is wrong.

When I asked Arsim why he thought those specific people were surprised, given that he, presumably, could not have been drinking—or cheating—in that particular situation, he cursorily, and with some discomfort, mentioned skin tone:

> What happened is that there is a widespread belief that everyone who is Muslim should have darker skin, this is the first misconceptions, and the second is that Muslims only come from the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan—the media created a negative image of Muslims. So misconceptions first; lack of proper information second.

In contrast to Arsim, and all my female Albanian participants, Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, said without hesitation that people are surprised when he publicly identifies as Muslim because of his skin colour:

> Well, at first they don't believe me, because I'm white. And then I explain to them that we are Muslims but . . . and then I have to go to history and tell them how we became Muslims, the Ottoman Empire, the occupation and this and that, [otherwise] they cannot understand.

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, said that the "Canadians" he works with were also surprised when they heard he was Muslim, but mostly because they could not reconcile his

personality with the representation of Muslims in the media: “You say you’re Muslim, Islam, the first thing they think is ‘whoa!’.”

The Bosnian Muslim participants more readily combined gendered/religious and racial markers to interpret people’s surprised reactions. Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s (who identified as an atheist) recalls bringing baklava to her previous place of work to celebrate Eid:

> I told them “It’s my holiday,” and they said, “It can’t be, it’s Eid,” and I tell them “Yes, I am Muslim,” and then their mouths opened and jaws dropped: “You cannot be, that is not possible.” Their reaction was that they were shocked: how can I be Muslim, with my crazy hairstyle, my clothing, skin colour . . . for them a Muslim woman wears a hijab, has darker skin . . . They cannot comprehend that there are Muslims in Europe who do not look any different from Canadians.

Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, likewise mentioned physical appearance as the reason behind people’s reactions:

> Then they are all surprised: “Oh you don’t look like a Muslim.” And then I ask them, “How do Muslims look?” and then they take a step back . . . “Impossible, I didn’t expect, how come,” and then you have to explain. And this happens very often . . . I guess they expect everyone to be brown or black, but then when you tell them you’re from Europe, then they’re okay.

Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, explains the surprise as follows:

> Most often people are surprised for one or two reasons—they are either surprised because they’ve known me as an atheist for a long time so they question my Muslim identity, or they’re shocked because I couldn’t possibly be a Muslim because I’m white.

Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, suggested that skin tone functions as a religious sign:

> The thing I find for me that is easier is that I’m white, I’m not covered, I don’t have any religious sign on me. So for me, when I say I’m Muslim, they are, like, “You’re Muslim?” or, “What do you mean you’re Muslim,” and I say I was born in Bosnia. And Bosnia, I try to explain that we had three religions and all that. And for them I don’t find that there’s a big reaction, because I’m not wearing any signs of religion and I’m white. There’s nothing on me that says I’m Muslim; I am not identified as one.

Another participant recalls that her non-Muslim Indian colleague could not reconcile her family's religious origin and their conduct. Importantly, conduct and clothing style served as clues to her Muslim family's values:

> When I revealed to him that [my family] is Muslim, and he met . . . my family, he was shocked. "What kind of Muslims are you? You guys drink, you do all kinds of these things, you wear short skirts and . . . "To him that was a shock, that they could be Muslims and very liberal.

In addition to appearance and religious signs, Mirsada also found that people cannot reconcile her being Muslim with her exceptionally successful career:

> Muslims are very undermined internationally and then a lot of people are surprised when I tell them what I do, and I have been here for [decades] and really, very, very often, when I tell them I am Muslim, their eyes go wide.

Mirsada's not looking like a "typical Muslim woman," along with her being an accomplished professional, led to a confusing situation at a Christmas party:

> They 100% have this expectation that we should all be covered. I remember once . . . I was invited to a Christmas party. We were seated and I asked if there was any pork and they asked why. And I said I was Muslim. And you wouldn't believe it, there were 28 people at the big table, and my friend said, "Mirsada is Muslim," and the information spread around the table: "Mirsada is Muslim." They couldn't [believe it] . . . This was my biggest shock.

While she laughs about the episode ("these are all very good people, very educated, they were my friends"), Mirsada explains that their reaction was rooted in the misconceptions that Muslim women must be "covered, wrapped up, uneducated." Mirsada says Turkish Muslims encounter the same reactions: "I can only say that maybe they don't know enough. They also mix up Turks—more Turks are blonde than dark, but they encounter the same reactions."

Interactions with Other Muslims

My participants have also publicly identified as Muslims to other Muslims outside their ethnic groups. Most have also encountered surprise due to their appearance:

> Even while the opposite happens, and people are Muslims, and they ask me where I'm from and what religion I belong to, and I say this is the religion, however, and they are, like, "Oh, no, you don't look like that." And I feel like people have some preconceptions of how religion on a person is supposed to look. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)

> The Arabs are surprised. When they see you, they see you're white, our skin is white you know, and when they see you're white they say, "Oh, you're Muslim, where are you from?" And when I say Albania, "Ah, okay," because they know that in Europe it's Bosnia, Kosovo, that are Muslim—not 100%, but there are Muslims over there . . . But when they see you at the beginning, because I look white, when you say, like, you're Muslim at the beginning they say, wow, it's, like, white and Muslim, you know. (Besim, man from Kosovo, mid-30s)

Some participants said that other people were not only surprised, but they also denied the participants' Muslimness based on their appearance:

> "No, I can't be" yeah "but [you're] not." I don't know what to say, I tell them I mean I was born Muslim, and I learned lots [about Islam] later on but just because I was very mad about the war . . . but they look at me like I am not. (Bosnian woman, 40s)

> It's interesting how people really perceive when you say you're Muslim. They first look at you and say, "No, you're not Muslim." The other day, I think, I met somebody. It was Muslim awareness week on campus and I'm waiting with my husband to get a coffee at Tim Horton's. There was a bunch of covered ladies, covered students, and they were giving out roses and the rose would have prophet Mohamed's message from Quran. She gave me the rose and I'm, like, "Sure," and she said you can go to that table there and learn more about Islam, and I had to say, "I think I know enough about Islam. My mother is Muslim." She actually stood back and looked at me, because I was wearing whatever I was wearing, which isn't very "Muslim-y." So she measured me top to bottom and kind of questioned again, "What?" and I'm, like, "Yeah, I'm half Muslim, my mother is Muslim," and she just ran away . . . That was an interesting experience. (Maja, Bosnian woman, mid-30s)

> Again it was like "Oh really, you don't look like . . . "Yes, I'm not covered. We'd go into this, I guess, because they even dress differently. I dress like Europeans do—I guess it's not uncommon for me to go to work with a skirt above the knee and high heels. It's my style. Whereas you wouldn't see somebody from a non-European Muslim [country] . . . you wouldn't see someone dressed like that. I don't want this to sound in a wrong way; it's not like I'm dressed inappropriately. (Anila, woman from Kosovo, mid-30s)

Anila's narrative reveals some thought-provoking dissonances. On the one hand, in contrast to non-European Muslim women, whom she uniformly excludes from Western ("European") fashion norms, Anila represents attractive clothing ("skirt above the knee and high heels") as a symbol of progress and, arguably, liberation from gender oppression. But on the other hand, Western gender norms, which continue to police women's bodies and judge women's morals and ethics based on how (freely) they dress, interfere with Anila's narrative: lest she be misjudged for a woman who dresses too 'liberally,' she adds that her style is not "inappropriate" and thus fits Western gender norms of respectable clothing.

These narratives show that skin colour operates as a religious sign in Canada, albeit a gendered one. For Muslim women, skin tone works in conjunction with religious markers to signal one's religion. However, for Muslim men, skin colour is often the only religious indicator. The social effects of "whiteness," importantly, are modified by other social markers, such as class or gender. Being a white woman is different from being a white man; being a white, working, poor man is different from being a white upper-middle-class woman. What reinforced "whiteness" in the interactions of my participants with other Canadians—Muslims and non-Muslims alike—was the general lack of familiarity with the heterogeneity of Muslims, as well as the ethno-religious composition of the Balkan region.

Melisa, a Bosnian woman, and Leka, an Albanian man, both in their late 20s, say that their behaviour and habits have been questioned by other Muslims:

> "Why do you eat bacon, why do you drink"—all these questions. For me it's simple, like: I was never raised with religion, and even in Bosnia when I was living there, our first neighbour was Serbian, and I've never seen beyond if she was nice to me. That's what matters: not where you're from, what you eat or drink. [But] that's the type of question I get, or, "Why don't you do Ramadan?" Or why am I not covered. (Melisa)

> I used to live with a roommate, but he moved to Alberta. He was from Libya. He was a real Muslim—he did the prayers. But when he was here, he invited me to go to a mosque, here in Montreal. I went two or three times to a mosque to pray . . . Sometimes he said that I was not a regular Muslim—okay, I don't eat pork meat, but I drink alcohol, and when we went out, I would always order beer and he would tell me, "Don't do that, brother." (Leka)

Besim, a practising Muslim from Kosovo in his 30s, has also had his Muslimness questioned, albeit in slightly different contexts. While the other participants drew boundaries between observant and non-observant Muslims, Besim's story illustrates that boundary-making operates within the religious Muslims' community as well:

> Because when you say you're Muslim, the first thing they ask you is how you read the Quran. "Do you speak Arabic?" and I say, "No, I don't speak Arabic." "How are you Muslim then?" I say I pray five times in Arabic. It doesn't mean you have to speak Arabic. You know how to pray, and that's it. And the Quran is translated into all languages.

Several participants gave specific examples of their interactions with Muslims outside their ethno-religious groups. Their perception is that Muslims from the Middle East do not see them as "real Muslims":

> They invite me to have dinner. They are always asking me how—they know that I'm Muslim—how people [in Albania] are practising the religion. In their country, they say, 95% are practicants, but good practicants. I explain that I'm a Muslim, but not a practicant like them. I cannot practise all aspects of our religion. (Leka)

> If I'm talking with real Muslim people, they don't like our Muslims because our Muslims are not really playing by the rules . . . Other Muslim countries are somewhat familiar with our Islam, either through making friends here, or through knowing Bosnian people here. One of my Lebanese colleagues always says, "Oh yeah, Bosnian Muslims are not real Muslims." That's their perception of our Muslims. It's interesting; it depends who you ask and who is the judge. (Maja)

> They, for some reason, they see us differently; they don't see us as them. I don't know what it is, I wish I could, I wish I knew what's in their mind when I say I'm Muslim too. The thing is, I could practise religion, I could pray five times a day and he could pray five times a day, but they see us differently, I don't know

> why. But it also depends where they come from, what part of the Middle East or the world. But they see us as different. I don't know why.
>
> Ivana: Where did you get that perception?
>
> Sami: My observation is 100% and the way I observe them talking to me is different. They think that we are less Muslims than them, or we are different than them. Some things are not clicking very much with them, I don't know why. I'm not saying all, but I have noticed few times they see us differently.

Maja also observed that her Muslimness is questioned because her father is not Muslim:

> Another interesting thing is that especially with Muslims—there's lot of Lebanese here—they would always ask me, if I say I'm from a mixed marriage, they would ask me, "Who is the Muslim in the family?" And I say my mother. Then they say you're not really Muslim because it goes via father's side. So that's what they tell me.

In contrast to being excluded from Muslimness based on appearance or non-observance, Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, described being forced into a specific kind of Muslimness by a Pakistani Muslim colleague:

> He asked me one time about being a Muslim, I said, "I am"—but I said, "I am an atheist, so I don't practise or anything." And he said, "Born a Muslim, always a Muslim." And that kind of made me uncomfortable, because I feel that his conceptions of what a Muslim is were a lot different from mine.

On the other hand, Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s who says she has interacted with many Muslims from the Middle East, reported that they are always surprised when she greets them "Salaam," but that they never questioned her behaviour—specifically, "why I am not covered."

Being an Atheist in Canada

On the one hand, as noted in Chapter 1, in 2011, almost a quarter of Canadians identified as following no religion, compared to 16.5% a decade earlier (Statistics Canada, 2016b). On the other hand, Canada is still a society in which the majority of people associate themselves with a religion: in the same survey, only 1.9% identified as atheists, and 1.8% as agnostics. What is the experience, then, of being an atheist in Canada? As Tomlins and Beaman (2015, p. 8) argue,

while the atmosphere towards atheists is more hostile in the United States than in Canada, and Canadian churches are increasingly marginalized, atheism—and non-religiosity in general—are far from becoming a "normative narrative." Interestingly, as Beaman (2015, p. 40) has noted, the religious "battles" in the Canadian public sphere rarely occur between various religious groups. The notable exception in this regard are public "contests" about, as Beaman argues "Christian 'values'" masked as "Canadian" values, which have focused primarily on Muslims. Beaman further argues that, increasingly, it is the religious and the non-religious that are confronting each other in the Canadian public sphere, particularly when the latter attempt to secularize the public space (e.g. by arguing in court for a removal of prayers and religious symbols from public spaces). Beaman argues, however, that in Canada, Christianity has transformed from a majority religion into culture; consequently, atheists attempting to challenge the presence of religious symbols in public spaces may be construed as challenging not only religion, but the national "Us," as well. This is an experience similar to that of Canadian Muslims, whose very presence has presented a challenge for the traditionally Christian Canadian society.

Three participants in the current study identify as both atheist and Muslim, and thus find themselves at the intersection of these multiple socially controversial identities. I asked them to compare and contrast their experiences of navigating these two seemingly contradictory identifications:

> Actually [being an atheist] is probably even worse than being a Muslim. Seriously, Canadian people, a lot of them, are still religious. I think it's actually probably worse being atheist in the States that's where they would burn you like a witch. But in Canada, people are surprised. A lot of my friends, even non-practising friends, they are still surprised that somebody is an atheist . . . I would like to raise my kids as atheists; personally I would like them to be aware of other religions and they probably will. (Maja)

> I think in some way the reaction I get for being a Muslim is like a shock, but then it's, "Oh, you've found common ground." But when people find out that

> I'm an atheist, it's like the world fell apart right before their eyes. I get the weirdest questions, like, "What do you believe in, then?" "Well, science, I don't know." I get like a thousand questions. I feel like people don't really have a good understanding of what an atheist is because they believe that atheism is like a movement of white, middle-class men who say a lot of stupid misogynistic racist stuff. The movement is now being associated with a small group of people, and people expect you to be like that—[to have] this outright hatred of religion and all of these other things. And they have a thousand questions . . . They don't seem to understand how you cannot believe in God, so . . .
>
> Ivana: Do you know other Bosnian Muslims who are also atheists?
>
> Nina: My dad is the only person I know who is an outright atheist, but most Muslim people I know are not, so they're not sure . . . They think there's a higher power. Sometimes the way they talk about it, it's almost as if it's out of fear—almost, like, just in case—that they believe.

Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, described one reaction to her public identification as an atheist:

> If you say that you're an atheist, people look at you like something's wrong with you. A Canadian friend told me [about a tragedy in her family]: "I managed to overcome it, because I have God, and you don't have him and if this happened to you, you wouldn't survive." I didn't say anything to her, and I survived being in a concentration camp without it.

However, unlike Maja and Nina, Adela finds that atheist Muslims in Canada are in a difficult position because they carry two stigmatized identities:

> Both carry their burdens. If you're Muslim, you're a potential enemy. If you're atheist, there is something wrong with you.
>
> Ivana: If you had to, what would you choose?
>
> Adela: Atheism. It's still easier. When it comes to this other burden, there is more discrimination.

The impression of Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s who is not an atheist (she "believes in God" but does not practise any religion and describes herself as a non-religious person), is that in Canada being not religious is more accepted than following a religion, Islam in particular:

> [I]t never happened to me that I discuss the Quran, or religion. I don't know, as long as you don't involve religion in anything, you are seen as more accepting, you know what I mean? If you are following one religion, then they have feelings that [people might think] you're defending . . . bad aspects of it, such as terrorism or things like that. And when you appear to be a non-religious person, and you don't talk about religion, then you're more understanding about everyone or everything around you.

Being Albanian and Bosnian Muslim in Post-9/11 Canada

In this section, I examine participants' narratives about their experiences as Balkan Muslims in Canada since 9/11. I asked them to describe their general impressions about the position of their groups as Albanians and Bosnians, and then as Muslims in Canada. I asked them to evaluate how their ethno-religious groups have been affected by Islamophobia, as well as to tell me about their personal experiences.

Being Albanian and Bosnian in Canada

Most of the participants said that their ethnic community is seen in a positive light in Canada because of their high education and hard work:

> We are a small community, usually, and I think that we are very appreciated by everybody because they can see that we made our way here in Canada. We are all doing good jobs, we educate our kids, we are good citizens. I think they are fond of us; whenever I met Canadians, they speak with respect. (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s)

> I know in Europe . . . [Albanians] have a bad name, especially in Italy and Greece, but here, when you say Albanian, it's not . . . [In my workplace], we are five Albanians working there, five girls, so every time [a co-worker] leaves, the owner comes and she says, "Do you know any other Albanians because you're a good worker, you work well, you're honest." (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

Like Albanian participants, Sanela, a Bosnian woman in her 40s, says that most Bosnian Muslims are highly educated and thus generally respected, although she has heard of exceptions:

> A lot of them actually are seen as very progressive, and because I am actually surrounded by people who are probably of a higher educational status, which means they have university degrees, at least college and university, and above Master's and PhDs. For most of them, they view us as hard working people, as

> very progressive, as open, loving. I don't, I haven't heard any of the bad things about Bosnian people. But, on the other hand, there are some stories about some people who actually arrived here and they're [taking advantage of] the system, they are living off the system. I don't know, but those kinds of people, nobody likes those kinds of people, whether you're Bosnian or not, it doesn't really matter . . . I think it has to do with upbringing, regardless of where are you from, if you are brought up to make something out of your life rather than just sitting and expecting that you'll be given something. I think that's the distinction between the two groups. But in general, my cousin's a surgeon, and the other one is a mechanic engineer, they love her as well, and [another cousin] is in political sciences . . . so I guess we are in a kind of higher educational status.

Are There Muslims in Europe?

Most of the participants said that Canadians in general are not familiar with their ethnic groups, especially their religious makeups. Only two participants mentioned that people occasionally assume they are Muslim based on their country of origin:

> Honestly if people ask me, "Where are you from?" and I say, "Bosnia," people here assume right away that I'm a Muslim. And when I tell them my name and then they ask me, "How come you are not a Muslim?" But for most people, if they follow politics and understand and follow world events, Bosnia is automatically a Muslim region. (Maja)

> And I find that some people assume that, I don't know, from what they read in the media, every time I say I'm Albanian, they say, "Oh, so you're Muslim." They just assume that, without even asking; it's a common perception of people to assume that. (Ariana)

Most of the participants, however, said that Canadians in general are not familiar with their countries of origins and their religious composition:

> A few of them know, but people who know about Albania, usually know that information too. I noticed that [those] people are aware a little bit. They have an interest in history and political things. So those people usually know this information, and usually are fascinated. It's kind of a fascinating subject to them. "Oh, is it true, how it works and things like that . . ." So that kind of discussion interests me. I don't have a problem there, when people are asking me things like that, to explain and to say that I have a Muslim background. It's a different context—people who are curious to learn more are more open to different sides of one story. It's more comfortable talking about it with those people. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

When knowledge is coupled with curiosity, Besa says she is more comfortable because she feels that she is less likely to be stereotyped. In contrast, a surprised reaction indicates that the other person's knowledge likely stems from stereotypes. Gentijana also thinks that most people do not associate Albanians with Muslim. However,

> But when I mention Kosovo, something clicks into their minds because of the war, and the war wasn't so far from now. They remember it. It might be that they think Albanians have more, and actually we have more, Muslims than Christians in our country. Before it was 75%, I don't know now, maybe the percentage has changed. I'm not aware of it, but before we were like this.

Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s, likewise thinks there is no clear association: "As soon as you say 'I'm from Egypt,' or Algeria, or something, they know when they see the ladies wearing the veil, then they make the connection, but us when we say we're Albanian, no." Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, put it in statistical terms:

> Well, in my experience, 15 years here in Canada, I can say maybe 5%, roughly, and those 5% are people who travel, or who have studied the history of Europe, and they know, more or less, what's going on in Europe, especially what's going on in Balkan, I can't say more than 5%, and don't forget, [in my workplace], you have more contact, or more public relations, with different races and different nationalities.

While Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, has been externally categorized as Muslim based on her country of origin, she says that most people do not make the connection:

> Albania is an unknown country. Very few people know about it, that's why. Sometimes I have to explain, because when I say Albania, they hear Lebanon, or Algeria. They say, "Oh, you're Lebanese," and I say, "Wait. Not Lebanese." Very few people, most people don't know. It's a small country.

Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, simply stated: "People don't know we have Muslims [in Europe]."

Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, also said that Canadians in general "don't know enough about Muslims in Europe" and that "when they hear 'Muslim,' they associate it with

Arabic people, with terrorism, that could be one thing and that's why they don't know more about other countries. When we first moved here . . . when I encountered people, it was rare they knew where Kosovo was." Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, says:

> Canadians don't have the general knowledge to know that there are Muslims in Europe. For them, Muslims are in the Arabic world, maybe African countries, are backwards, uneducated, narrow-minded. I haven't noticed that they can tell the difference if you're from Arabic countries or Europe, because for them Muslims in Europe do not exist.

While most participants decried the lack of knowledge of both their countries of origin and Muslims in general, it appears that the social ignorance, along with their white appearance, has contributed to shielding participants from Islamophobia.

Being Muslim in Canada

I asked participants how they feel Muslims in Canada are perceived in general. In Chapter 6, Ervin, an Albanian man, referred to Islam as "the most hated religion, right now." Sami, a man from Kosovo, however, finds that urbanity has an effect on the perceptions:

> It depends on where in Canada, if it's a rural area or if it's in a big city, because in a big city people are more open-minded because they're used to see that community, those people from that religion in that area, and let's say if it is a small city or small town, they may misjudge or they may see it in different way.

Sami's perception is also that Canadian society's opinion of Muslims has started to change for the better:

> The way I see it, religions don't really matter as much. It's up to the person. If they see that you have a good heart and you're honest and you do the best you can, I don't think they will misjudge. But now, because of all these terrorist attacks worldwide, in the name of Islam, but everybody is starting to believe now that it is wrong, it's not right, it is just a camouflage to blame Islam for it. People at the beginning, if you said that you're Muslim, they didn't feel comfortable; but lately, they understand that this has nothing to do with religion, so, if you were talking to people years ago, which in fact happened to me, and you said you're a Muslim, after all the conversations, they would kind of step

> back, they wouldn't feel comfortable with you. But now, it's different. Now if you say you're Muslim, you're Muslim. It's not a big deal.

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, likewise said that he feels good both as an Albanian and Muslim in Canada:

> In general, I feel very good, you know. In Canada, actually, everybody should feel good. But you know, the thing is it doesn't matter where you're from, it doesn't matter which country—in Canada we feel good. Nowhere is free, you know, but free means that you don't see wars, you don't see things like . . . you are secure here, you know. I feel good. For me, where I live I don't care.

In marked contrast to experiences of racialized Muslims in Canada and the West, most of my participants agreed that they personally and their ethno-religious communities have not been majorly affected by Islamophobia. Adela, a Bosnian woman, said that her Canadian-born children also "do not have major issues. They don't have an accent, no need to disclose that they are Muslims. They only do so when they don't eat pork. When my youngest son's soccer team orders pizza with pepperoni, he removes the pepperoni, and eats the pizza."

Participants provided different interpretations as to why their ethno-religious groups have not been affected by anti-Muslim animosity. A Bosnian participant in her 40s, said that neither her nor her brother who lives in the United States, have ever had a negative experience because they were Muslim. She attributes such experiences to personality traits and good moral character:

> And it has to do something with your personality. It depends on how you actually embrace the other people—that's probably how they will embrace you as well, in the end, if you are a good citizen. And here you need to be a good citizen and try to make the best out of it. Then I think nobody will criticize you or look at you differently.

Several Albanian participants attributed their relative lack of negative experiences to the general population's unfamiliarity with the religious makeup of Albania and its ethnic groups:

> I think they are not much affected; as I told you, a lot of people don't know that some of Albanians are Muslims. So I think that plays a role, that people don't

> know it, they don’t even realize it, so it doesn’t change the perception of people about Albania. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)
>
> I think that geographical position plays a major role. There are countries that are known to be Muslim—for example, Iran—because they are known to be Muslims, there are I guess those stereotypes . . . but you know what I mean, like, “Oh my God, they are hard core religions, there are this and that . . .” But because Albania is an unknown country, very few people know about it, that’s why. The same idea: it’s not the same experience for us. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)

Besa also said that Albanian Muslims, and Albanians in general, are not on the radar because they do not practise their religion(s):

> I have family in the US, and from the same background like me, Muslim. I never heard of a problem, of discrimination because of their background, but they are, as I described myself, not practising. I never heard of a problem, even for people living in the US, from Albanian background. I think Albanians are an adaptable species, if I can say it like that. It’s a joke of course, but some may see it like maybe not a solid thing, but I think we are adaptable—people easily integrate with the habits and traditions of the place, I think. They are not noticed, or something.

Gentijana, an Albanian woman in her 40s, said that Albanian Muslims have not had any problems because they are “very integrated in Canada” as a result of their high education:

> That I can say for sure. Very well integrated. It might be because usually when they ask for documents for people to come in Canada, they take the best of us. They want us with university education, they go into the details of our past and so they get the best of Albanians I think. Most of us.

Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, says that Albanian Muslims have not had any issues because they are Europeans. While most of the participants said that Canadians in general do not know much about Albania, Sami says that there exists an advantageous awareness that Albania is a European country:

> No, absolutely not, as soon as they realize that we are from Europe . . . No. Because usually I go to the US, I come back, I go to Europe, and these countries know our history very well. We are pretty much allies with these countries. Actually, I was very welcomed, maybe the way this person at the border had experience with other Albanians. I’m not sure. But I’ve never experienced

> something like that, and also my fellow Albanians, they never experienced such a problem. I don't know.

Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, likewise said that he had not heard of any issues with Albanian Muslims from Kosovo. He describes Albanians as "European people" and provided a gendered testament of Europeanness, progress, and the resultant irreligiosity:

> Albanians from Kosovo, no. You'd hear about something like that quickly. We're not a large group, no, no. Albanians are very European people. In Kosovo today—I shouldn't be saying this—girls are dressed better than in Paris, the fashion is . . . I was a bit surprised, there are so many beauty salons, they're fixing eyebrows, using a lot of make-up. This has always been a tradition in Kosovo. Kosovo has 1,700,000 people. There are so many famous people in the arts. Rita Ora, well, I won't list them all. Kosovo has Miss Kosovo. They have nothing to do with it, especially the young generation, with religion.

One of the other participants, Maja, while not espousing the narrative of a "proud European," admits that the region of birth has made a difference in the experiences of different Muslims post 9/11: "In my opinion it's not just again the religion in this case, but it's also the nationality that plays a big role for Muslims that are European and Muslims that come from other regions."

Ontario vs. Québec

A few participants touched on the differences between Ontario and Québec in the treatment of Muslims, and minorities and immigrants in general. Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, who lives in Ontario, said, "It's a little bit different in Québec. There's an influence of France. France is the most racist country in Europe . . . Ontario is much more liberal than Québec when it comes to everything. It's the influence of France, you know?" Another Bosnian participant immigrated to Quebec City as a child and spent most of her life there. She says that being Muslim is easier in Ontario than Québec:

> I find it, it's less here [in Ontario], but I used to live in Quebec City, which is very . . . is less open than here . . . First, what I've seen is that there are more people wearing scarves or religious sign in Ontario, than in Québec . . . My first time ever that I saw a full niqab was here in Ontario. So for me, I don't

> remember seeing—well, I probably have seen, but I don't recall seeing—many religious signs in Québec versus here. And I feel also that people here, since there are Indians, Italians, Portuguese, many different cultures . . . I feel there's more openness towards immigrants than in Québec . . . I feel more like I'm belonging here than when I was living in Québec, because of the fact that they are against immigration and all that. So I feel more welcome here in Ontario.

Besa, who lives in Québec, touched on the Charter of Values, a bill put forward by the governing Parti Québécois in 2013, which proposed, among other things, to ban public sector employees from displaying "conspicuous" religious symbols. The bill was widely interpreted as targeting Muslim women who cover their faces. Besa, however, thinks that the controversy around the Charter was exaggerated by the media, and that it actually gave people space to voice their opinions:

> And when you have a space, usually people who like to complain take it, the space. It was shown that people were negative and things like that. But I think that's not the majority of the people, first of all; and second of all, I think that reality shows it, people work and live together and things like that. And it didn't pass, the charter didn't pass. It shows people are open to discussing things, and agree or disagree, and we take decision. I don't have a problem with that.

Another participant, who also lives in Québec, said that the fact that the PQ leader lost votes in her own riding shows that "people believe that everyone can believe in their religion."

Experiences of Travel

Similar to the phrase "driving while black," the phrases "flying while Muslim" and "flying while brown" refer to Muslims' experiences of being profiled at airports and border crossings. A recent Environics Institute survey (2016) showed that 25% of Canadian Muslims reported encountering difficulties while travelling across borders (p. 39; also Cainkar, 2009; Nagra, 2017). I asked participants if they or anyone from their communities had had similar experiences:

> I never heard about Albanians being stopped at the airport because they are Muslims. This is my experience I am talking about, and what I heard. We might have been stopped at the airport because we didn't have the right documents or

> something else, but not because we were Muslims. I never heard about it. (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s)

> Truly, I can't remember. I can't think of an example. I don't know. (Leka, Albanian man, late 20s)

> I've never heard of any issues, and I've never experienced anything like that, no. (Melisa, Bosnian woman, late 20s)

> To tell you the truth, no. (Besim, a man from Kosovo, mid-30s)

> I don't know. Essentially, we don't look different. We get off easier. (Adela, Bosnian woman, late 50s)

> I've never heard anything like that, nor was I ever interested. I've never had issues. (Mirsada, Bosnian woman, 60s)

While participants in this study have not personally experienced any difficulties travelling, a few did tell me about others' experiences:

> My brother has been [stopped at the airport] . . . Every time he would fly out to [the US], he'd be pulled out of the airport and be searched, and he is the most mellow guy ever. We would laugh, and at one point you know it made him feel uncomfortable. And why was he pulled, I don't know, I think he's a little, his skin is more olive, so I think it has to do with that, and we would say to him, "They know you don't want to be pulled and that's why they're pulling you." So his skin is olive and I want say it had to do with his skin colour. And this happened two or three times in a span of a maybe a year. (Anila, Kosovar woman, mid-30s)

I asked Anila if she thought that the agents thought he was Muslim: "I think it had something to do with its skin colour, yes." While the episodes continue to be a source of amusement for the family, Anila says that her brother was bothered by these experiences. Anila has heard of no other similar incidences: "No, nothing has happened to me personally, me or my husband. Mind you, my husband is blond with blue eyes. Nothing would ever happen to him probably." She also mentioned that her carry-on was searched on a recent trip to Europe, but that it was random and had nothing to do with her being Muslim.

Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, was the only Bosnian participant who had a personal story related to travelling while Muslim:

> The first time my dad ever crossed the border into the US, it was post 9/11. I think it was pretty soon after that. He was interrogated for six hours and wasn't allowed to pass, for that time or whatever. And I know his friend who was with him as well, Bosnian Muslim, he was also interrogated. I think that was absolutely unnecessary. But, you know, however they found out, they knew that my father's and my grandfather's name was Husein and that was enough to make them not trust them.

Overall, these stories stand in sharp contrast to the evidence of the experiences of racialized Muslims in Canada. In the most comprehensive study to date of young Canadian Muslims of various (non-European) ethnic backgrounds on this topic, Nagra (2017) described that, during travel, her participants would often be asked questions about "their nationality, their loyalty to Canada, their associations with the Middle East, and their religious beliefs and practices" (p. 137). Nagra's participants also described arriving to the airport hours earlier in case they are questioned, coming close to missing their flights due to being questioned, making sure they "do not have anything extra on them," as well as changing their appearance by trimming their beards and taking off their hijabs in order to look more "Western." Nagra argues that the racialized border practices, as well as Canadian Muslims' responses to these practices, speak to the "inscribing of suspicion and illegality onto the bodies of those who look Muslim" (p. 139).

Personal Experiences and Responses to Islamophobia

While most of the participants said that they personally have not confronted any major issues related to their being Muslims, and that their ethno-religious communities have generally been spared Islamophobia, a few described being in Islamophobic situations. These episodes typically occurred in the context of other people being unaware that the participants were Muslim.

Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, says he once had an unpleasant interaction with a co-worker he described as "Canadian Canadian. White, English":

> This was three, four years ago, because we are white, European Muslims, and Europeans in general are white, she kept talking against religion, and then I

> didn't want to stop her actually, to see how far . . . and I let her spill what's inside of her, just to see how much education she had regarding religion and people.

When Sami told his co-worker he was Muslim:

> Then she got stuck, she took a step back, she said, "No, you're not Muslim, you're white, you're from Europe, you're such a good man." Then I said, "Well, religion is a personal thing. You can also change the religion whenever you feel, when you feel peace in you. Also everything you hear about Islam and Muslim people, it is not true, because you're talking only for a group that's trying to destroy the meaning of being a Muslim." So that kind of educated her . . . It was a very uncomfortable situation, because being Canadian, that's what I said in general, people are nice. But when you speak individually, being a Canadian, I didn't know that people can really think that much negative about Muslim people.

According to Sami, his co-worker made a chain of assumptions: he is white→he is from Europe→ he cannot be Muslim→he is a good man→she can freely speak against Muslims and religion in general in front of him. Recall that Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, "comes out" as Muslim specifically in situations when she hears anti-Muslim comments, despite being an atheist of mixed religious origins: "It feels like I need to stand up to them, because I feel like I have a sense of solidarity and especially going through the Bosnian war, I feel like there are often misconceptions." Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, said that "Canadians" base their opinions mainly on what they see on television. He, however, tries to change the perceptions by speaking with people:

> I talk a lot to Canadians, to the Québécois: we speak, we share words, we try to . . . Because some people will believe what they see on TV, and that's not true all the time . . . Where I work there was a Christian, and we talked. Things were happening in France and all over the world. I talked to him about real Muslims who are good Muslims. He said, "Yes, I know. But these attacks, they say Islam is attacking, not Muslims, but Islam." They put everyone in the same basket. And this is wrong, you know. Because you have to separate things. You have to separate things. Not everyone is the same. A terrorist can be from everywhere, not just from Muslim: it can be Catholic, Orthodox, Christian, Buddhist . . .

Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, told me of a time she was subjected to an Islamophobic comment:

> I was in a situation where I told my friend, who was desperate to find a job because she had a part-time job, about a . . . job in an Arabic Muslim school. She didn't know I was Muslim and said "I would never work with Muslim people, in this school," with such an [attitude].

In contrast to participants who confront Islamophobia, Adela decided not to make a stand against the Islamophobic comment:

> [I said] nothing, I am not dumb, I won't . . . Deep inside she is a good person, but a person with certain limitations. I didn't want to tell her [I was Muslim] and I don't flaunt it in my current workplace because I want to hear what they're thinking and I don't want people to act the way they don't want to [around me].

This narrative recalls the negative experiences of another participant's mother on the day of 9/11, when she came home crying because she overheard anti-Muslim comments. However, this participant also said that the comments were not aimed at her mother directly, as she did not look Muslim. She likewise did not confront the people making the comments, and, like Adela, she does not publicly identify as Muslim anymore. Her father, however, was spared the negativity her mother experienced because he "was working more with people from Bosnia, so he didn't really have to interact with Canadians." For him, carving a niche via ethnic entrepreneurship served as a buffer against Islamophobia.

The Stigma of Being Immigrant

Some participants said that any negativity or prejudice they experienced was more due to their being immigrants or refugees, than Muslim. Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, said that she has only had one negatively charged interaction with a client who was disputing a bill:

> I started explaining to him what the charges were and why there were correct, he asked where I was from, so I told him I was from Kosovo. Not a lot of people knew back then where Kosovo was, so I said it was part of ex-Yugoslavia, that

> whole thing, and he said, "Of course it's wrong, with people like you." So being that he was a client and I was in my workplace, I didn't say anything. I let him vent and moved on. That was the only time that I ever felt as an outsider.

I asked Anila how she interpreted the comment:

> I get the feeling it was something to do with, not [with me being] Albanian or Muslim, because he didn't know that I was a Muslim, a Catholic, or an Orthodox at that point. It was just the fact that there were refugees coming in and they were almost taking over. That was the only time I had ever to deal with in terms me not being comfortable or feeling out of place.

Anila interprets that the fact that she came as a refugee, and not just an immigrant, made the client even more hostile towards her in a situation that was already negatively charged. However, as she emphasized throughout the interview, since she cannot be externally read as Muslim, her perception is that the client could not have assumed from the available information that she was Muslim.

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s said he observed that some of his compatriots do not want to disclose their national origins, as they would rather be "Canadians":

> Some people, when you talk to them, they don't say where they were born. I say no, for me no, actually I came, I say to people I came in 1999, I came here as a refugee, you know. I don't hide things, you know; some people hide, they try to be Canadian.
>
> Ivana: These are people from Albania, that don't want to say where they're from?
>
> Besim: That's the point, yeah.
>
> Ivana: Why do you think they don't want to say where they come from?
>
> Besim: I don't know. Maybe they think, because Albania is a poor country, well it doesn't mean poor, but compared to Canada, not near, you know. Maybe they don't want to say that, that they're Albanians. I don't know. Maybe they just want to be Canadians, you know what I mean. Maybe they had a hard life, they were poor, the regime over there was very high, strong. Or maybe the people were poor, people got killed for nothing, for money. Maybe for these reasons they don't want to say . . . They don't even want to hear about it, you know, because they don't want to go back in time, you know. Because when you think

> about these things, you go back, and you feel like in the moment you're over there.

Gentijana remembered incidents in the early years of Albanian immigration to Canada, but said that these were not based on religion:

> In the beginning when I came here in Canada, because we Albanians were very closed as a country, we opened up and democracy came. A lot of people, they were not behaving as they should, the negative side of Albania came out. They were treating Albanians like third country people. They were, I won't say not polite, but it was something that defined us from the others. But not because we were Muslims, because we were Albanians.

Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, found that immigrants in Canada are generally not considered equal to native-born Canadians:

> Canadian society tries to make it look like we're all equal. Just by being here you get all the rights, just like everyone else. But then they show you that is not really the case, not only based on your nationality, but everything else . . . Generally there are differences between migrants and non-migrants, not written, but unwritten. Connections, promotions, it all comes with the length of time, breathing here, knowing the laws, knowing the loopholes, culture, what you can or cannot do. And all these lead to the fact that if you don't have that knowledge, you become insecure and inferior . . . You are accepted at work, but you're always indirectly let known that "You should be happy you're among us."

Experiences of Other Muslims Post 9/11

I asked my participants if they were familiar with the experiences of Muslims outside of their ethnic groups. From observing or interacting with other Muslims, most of the participants found that other Muslims have had a more difficult time navigating the post-9/11 world than they have.

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, said that he has had encounters with Muslims outside his ethnic groups:

> Actually, I am just going to let you know one thing. I was working at this firm . . . and there were Muslims from other countries over there, and when I say, "What's your religion," they hide it, they don't say it. And I said, "Don't be scared, if you're a good person, you don't have to hide it." You know. Just say

> it, if you are. Be yourself. You are Muslim, you are Catholic, you are Orthodox, let people see your, who you are, as a person.
>
> Ivana: And why do you think they hide it?
>
> Besim: I have no idea. Maybe because of the things happening in the world. I don't know.

Gentijana, an Albanian woman in her 40s, said that she has heard of Muslims who have changed their names in order to find employment:

> We had at work a person that said his name was . . . What was his name? And he put Daniel. I don't remember now his name in Arab, but he put it Daniel and he changed his surname and he got job. He couldn't get a job before. I heard it from himself.

Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s, said she often hears stories of other Muslims' experiences, but was not sure if their difficulties were due to their religion or other factors:

> This is a story I hear all the time. But I have people, let's say my colleague, my Moroccan colleague, she said she left her job because she couldn't find herself between French people because they were totally not socializing with her or something. I heard these kind of things, I don't know why it happened, you know. It might not be more even because she was a Muslim, right? She didn't say that it was because she was Muslim. She said, "I couldn't feel in there," you know, like the circle they had, they were all French people. She couldn't find herself in their culture maybe, or I don't know. She couldn't be friends with them, right? So she said, "I left by myself because I couldn't handle this."

An Albanian participant said she works with a few Algerian women who wear a hijab. She says that she does not know anything about their experiences, although she has observed Islamophobia: "Even some of the [clients] don't like the idea that they are there, that they are covered. But nothing was made public. Maybe they think stuff inside, we never know."

Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, said that when a terrorist attack happens, she feels bad for the people who were hurt, but does not take it personally or think it will affect her. But her best friend, who is from Pakistan, reacts differently:

> Every time something happens, he calls me and he says, "It's getting so much harder for us now," because they'll be saying, "Muslims did this, did that, it's getting so much harder for me, now I won't find a job." Every time something happens here in Canada, or even the world, he's going to discuss that with me, how insecure he feels about his future and how being a Muslim will affect him in the future.

When Ariana empathizes with him by saying she is "from another country too," he rejects her act of sympathy, telling her, "No, I'm more affected and you know it."

Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, argued that non-European Muslims generally face greater difficulties, particularly because they are racialized minorities:

> I think that they face Islamophobia in conversations and things like that, where people think that they're actually being nice, but they're actually being anti-Muslim. The way I've always understood this [is that] a lot of [the behaviours] are really racist, like anti-brown, in some ways more than they are anti-Muslim.

Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, told me of the experiences of a Lebanese Muslim colleague:

> I had an opportunity to speak to a colleague . . . he says that countless times he has been pulled out and stripped naked, searched. When he'd see them put the gloves on he'd say, "No, why don't you just scan me?" He's from Lebanon also. Because of his darker skin and Arabic look, he can't pass the airport [without being pulled out]. He travels business class and then they think al-Qa'ida or who knows who paid for it. As soon as he hands over his passport, he's ready to follow them. The man is used to being searched.

Adela has also observed gender differences in the treatment of Muslim women and men:

> You have the Syrian example. Not only Canada, but Europe too, they won't accept Syrian Muslims because they are afraid and say it openly. Syrian Christians are welcome, but Muslims are not. They are afraid of men as potential terrorists. Muslim men have it much worse.

Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, says she works with people from Muslim-majority countries who, despite their upper-middle-class backgrounds and professional and educational attainments, have had adverse experiences: "Regardless of everything, if you're a person of colour and you're Muslim, then . . . this is my impression at least."

A few participants know Middle Eastern Muslims who face difficulties even if they look white:

> And even though . . . she is white, blonde, doesn't wear any scarves or anything, she was feeling that, for her, the jobs that she didn't get might be because she was an immigrant, things like that. And I know that when she was doing the Ramadan, people would ask questions . . . And her husband also had a lot of difficulties finding a job, even though he had a Master's in Administration and she's an engineer . . . Her situation was different, but I don't know if it's because she comes from Algeria . . . but I've never felt anything like that. The jobs I got, I got them because I was myself. I never felt I didn't get a job because I was an immigrant. (Melisa, Bosnian woman, late 20s)
>
> Non-European Muslims have it much harder. I have a friend who does not wear a hijab, does not look Arab, but when she says that she is, she feels people withdrawing. They don't accept her, they don't treat her equally. The moment she identifies herself, she feels the difference.
>
> Ivana: Does she also not publicly identify as Muslim?
>
> Adela: No. It could be a path of least resistance, or maybe a desire to fit in, a lack of energy to stand up to them, to explain, when it leads nowhere. You simply let it go and become discouraged and at every comment you think, "Until when?"

An Albanian participant said that she personally does not know anything about the experiences of other Muslims. However, her daughter's best friend is from Algeria and her family "keep their traditions." She recalled watching news coverage of a terrorist attack committed by a Muslim group. She recounted her daughter

> being very drastic about it, and she said "Oh, everything bad happens because of the Muslims, they are not right about that," but it was news, something that really happened, the people were Muslim and we had to have a discussion about that.

This participant described how she interpreted her daughter's reaction:

> I think [it had to do with] her friend's background. As I told you, we're not very religious at home and everything, she was not brought [up] with those religious . . . It was because of her friend, she was feeling probably her friend attacked or something . . . it wasn't about her personally, but she took personally the fact that I was confronting her.

All in all, most of the participants were at least to some extent aware of the experiences of Muslims outside their ethno-religious groups, mostly those from the Middle East. The previous sections show that there is a clear difference between how the participants evaluate their own experience as Muslims, and how they perceive racialized and Muslims who wear religious signs have been treated by Canadian society. Besides being occasionally subjected to Islamophobic remarks, participants and their communities have been largely spared the more overt forms of anti-Muslim sentiments, such as racial profiling and difficulty while travelling.

Being Muslim in Canada and Elsewhere

My participants also compared Canada to other countries, mainly the United States and Western Europe. They based their comparisons on personal experiences, the experience of others (family and friends), and general knowledge, mainly coming from the media. Generally, the Albanians painted Canada as more tolerant than other countries, while the Bosnians were more critical.

A few participants compared Canada's and other Western countries' treatment of immigrants in general. Greece and Italy are primary migration destinations of Albanian immigrants. In both countries, however, Albanians have faced stigmatization and discrimination, despite documented efforts to integrate (King & Mai, 2008). Ervin mentioned that his sister was "forced" to convert to Orthodox Christianity upon immigrating to Greece. Besa, an Albanian woman in her 40s, lived in Greece prior to immigrating to Canada. Since Greece is not "a country of immigrants," "the society" often treated Albanian and other immigrants unfairly. In contrast:

> [H]ere in Canada I think what's different is it is in fact a country of immigrants from the beginning, from the colonies. I think that already changes the dynamics. People are more aware, even if they are more open or what, of differences or diversity, different cultures, languages and everything. That's the first thing that makes things easier here.

Vera compared the experiences of Albanian immigrants in Canada and Italy:

> Well, here it's more open. It's for everyone. They give you the chances. Because I have my sister in Italy, and I went there to visit, and she said, "Don't speak Albanian!" But here, we speak our language with each other, without being ashamed, we're proud to talk our language and nobody understands what we're saying. So nothing compares: it's open, they give you the opportunity, it doesn't matter where you come from.

Ervin echoed both Besa and Vera's assessments:

> But on the other side of the ocean, in Europe, I know perfect in Greece, Albanians, if they are not Orthodox, they are forced to change their religion to get jobs and to get paid, and so on . . . More or less a little bit in Italy, but for the rest of the countries I can't say, because our relatives and friends, most of them are in Greece or in Italy. I can't say for the rest of Europe. Don't forget Greece is part of the EU, and they are a little bit so-called powerful in there, for their religion, nationality and whatever. We know perfectly that Greece forces people [who are] non-Orthodox to change their religion to Orthodox. Some of the people in Italy did it just get a better job, but as I said, here in Northern America we don't really feel that. Well, me personally and my family didn't feel that at all.

Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, contrasted Canada to Europe in terms of how Muslims in general are treated:

> Well, in Europe, people look at Muslims: "If you're Muslim, okay, you are dangerous"; but here in Canada it's quite different. Here, people are treated for what they are—it doesn't matter if you are Orthodox or Buddhist, doesn't matter. But in Europe, you can feel the difference . . . I would say in my working environment, there is a place for the Muslim people to pray. I'm working in a call centre. We have a kitchen where we stay during lunch or break, and there is also another place where people can make prayers. So from this I understand that people here respect others doing the prayers they want. You know, people respect other people for who they are and what they are.

Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, compared Canada to France and other Western European countries:

> France and Western [European] countries are a bit more radical in their approach of accepting people. They are more, well, not close-minded, no, it's just that . . . A few years ago I was [watching] this documentary about how Muslim people are treated in France. The way I remember it, it was saying that

> French people are afraid of these Muslim people taking over, and changing their culture, and it's why they're fighting them. Here in Canada, I don't think there's such an issue, Muslim people taking over, there are people from everywhere. Just like saying, "Oh, people of Indian background will take over, or Asian background will take over"—that's not such an issue here.

Ariana's impression of France is reinforced by a friend's experience:

> He had just immigrated from France to Canada. He was of African descent. And he was telling me how he just came to Canada few months ago, he told me how glad he was to be here, because France was a very racist country. The way he put it—I haven't been to France, so I don't know, but this is the way he describes France—he told me he was very glad to be in Canada because Canada doesn't seem to be that way. So, I'm just going by his word, I don't know for sure how it is.

Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, also compared Canada to Western Europe:

> There is freedom of religion in Canada, this is very positive and largely helps prevent extremism. Although Canadians say, "Now someone will throw a bomb," I say no, because Canada guarantees their rights, all their rights are guaranteed. And when your rights are guaranteed, why would you do it? Unlike in other countries: for example, in Western Europe there is another trend, a trend of racism and populism to a large extent, and I think this is pretty bad compared to Canada.

Sami compared Canada to Switzerland:

> I travel a lot. Canada is the best country on the planet to live in. Because, you can believe in any religion, you can believe in anything. And we as Canadians—because now I'm a Canadian too—we accept, we respect as much as you don't interfere with my own religion. So Canada is a unique country, for many things. They say Switzerland and Canada are almost the same; they are not the same, no absolutely not. I've been to Switzerland; it's far different from Canada. When it comes to living in Canada, as I said, it's the best country in the world.

A few participants compared Canada to the United States. Anila has family in the United States and says that they never reported experiencing any issues based on their ethnic or religious origin:

> I never have specifically asked if they had issues or not. However, we do talk a lot so if something would have happened, I would have known, they would have made a point of telling me, "Oh my God, this happened." I've never, and

> they've been in the States for 19 to 20 years, I've never heard them saying that this happened because of who we are. They both have very good jobs, they do very well, which leads me to believe that it's not an issue.

While her family in the United States has never had any issues, Anila generally finds that

> [I]n the States there's the rich and the poor, and in between is a tight number, whereas in Canada there's more equality, more diversity. I have had the opportunity to excel in Canada. Would I have been given this opportunity in the States, probably not. I find in the States they are more racist, hands down, and that's in my opinion, compared to here. I have moved up the ladder in the industry that I'm in; I've done schooling here. I've worked my butt off, but I was also given opportunities for the work I did, and not for who, where I came from or what my religion was.
>
> Ivana: So what do you think would have been a potential obstacle in the US, hypothetically?
>
> Anila: I probably wouldn't have been given the opportunities to excel the way that I have here, I don't think I would have been given the . . .
>
> Ivana: Because of what?
>
> Anila: I would say because I'm not an American.
>
> Ivana: Because you're an immigrant?
>
> Anila: That's the word I was looking for.

Arsim, a man from Kosovo in his 60s, echoed Anila's comparison of Canada and the United States: "Canada is much more liberal. Rights are guaranteed and respected. It's different in the States."

I spoke to Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, a few weeks after Donald Trump was elected president of the United States. I asked him if he thought a similar scenario could occur in Canada:

> First, demographically, we are, there is a big difference, and also population, they're 400 million, and we are 35, whatever . . . There's a huge difference between population size. And also you probably have areas in the US where there are no Muslims whatsoever. Some people are so uneducated in the US. Honestly, sometimes when I hear their interviews, I say, oh my God, is this person from this planet, or has this person ever been to school. It makes you think what kind of people live there. I'm not saying all, I cannot generalize, but

> you have these small communities that are pretty much isolated. So if a Muslim goes there, most likely he may be attacked, intimidated just being there, but until they live with Muslim people, they can just judge . . . On the other hand, actually I've seen a video, probably I should send to you, how a US soldier protected a Muslim guy from Americans, white Americans, so I was quite impressed with what really happened in that store, because all the scene happened in the store. So I don't think Muslims should really be worried about, all that, from the future president and talking like that, from Donald Trump, it shouldn't worry Muslims.

Another participant echoed Sami's assessment based on the experiences of her brother, who lives in the United States:

> In the US it depends where do you live. In the small cities they are actually welcomed, but in the larger cities, they may actually be against you completely. It depends. Then also, well, this is a double sword, it depends, even small cities can be very opinionated in terms of the acceptance of immigrant people . . . In New York city, for example, you blend I guess. Now I'm just thinking about it: New York city is huge, lots of people are immigrants, or are coming to work there, so I think you kind of blend.
>
> Canada is more of an immigrant country, although probably every other [country] is also immigrant . . . The thing is, here, immigrants are welcome, there, immigrants are not, and I think that's what makes a difference. For example, in Germany, they don't like immigrants whatsoever, they don't like tourists, Bosnians, anybody.

Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, said that she is not familiar with the experiences of Bosnian Muslim immigrants outside Canada. Based on media reports and general knowledge, she told me:

> I would say the best place to live as a Muslim is in Canada, because we have great policies for immigration, we have great opportunities and great organizations that can help immigrants or refugees to integrate to Canada, and when I see what's going on in Europe, or the US . . . I was in Paris the week before the attacks in Paris, and I saw a lot of Muslims there and I never felt threatened, or anything . . . But also because [of the policies] towards immigration and refugees and all that, I think that Canada is the best place to be if you're an immigrant because people are more open. And of course, we don't hear about the massacres that happen over there, even in the US, because I think we have great opportunities and great things to help them integrate in Canadian society.

Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, was the only participant who compared Canada to other countries in a more critical manner. On the one hand, Adela agreed that Muslims in Europe face greater difficulties than Muslims in Canada:

> If we're talking about Muslims in France, they are in a much worse position than Muslims in Canada, because they are told how to dress. In Canada, at least they let you keep your tradition. But now it is a question of interpretation, a nuance. In Europe you are considered an "ausländer," especially if you're Muslim, and the French force you to take off the hijab, or they won't accept, it's a different story. At least in Canada there is some flexibility. Theoretical flexibility, but flexibility. Practically it doesn't work yet, and I think it never will.

On the other hand, Adela also sees hypocrisy in how Canada's religious minorities in general are treated:

> When it comes to Muslims and all other minorities, for example. For example, Christmas is a national holiday, we have state-funded Catholic schools. I can understand that you can have all kinds of schools, but to have different buses, teachers, and everything else funded by the government? You're paying for the whole group. If everyone's equal, then you should fund Orthodox Christian and all other schools should. You cannot have public and Catholic school boards.

Adela's previous remark is another personal example of this perceived hypocrisy:

> When we came to Canada, we were in a terrible position as Muslims because, unlike Serbs and Croats, who went to Canadian churches and represent themselves as Bosnians and were helped by everyone, Muslims, Bosniaks, did not go to churches, were not helped. And for example, everyone, from the Mormons to all other Christians, would go to churches and pick up Serbs and Croats, take them places and help them and then they would talk about the wonderful time they had, unlike us who didn't receive this kind of help.

Views of Multiculturalism

Overall, the accounts presented in the previous section reflect the dominant narratives which evaluate Canada as a much more—in fact the most—accepting country for Muslims and immigrants in general. Multiculturalism in particular played an important role in participants' forming strategies for resisting Islamophobia. Most of the participants, the Albanians in

particular, expressed pride in Canada's policy of multiculturalism. This is not surprising given that both grand cultural repertoires of Albanians and Canadians (i.e., Albanianism and multiculturalism) comprise the same conceptual tenets, namely religious diversity and tolerance:

> It's absolutely great, I mean, it's the best thing Canada has, probably one of few things that keeps me staying here. I'm very . . . I don't know how to explain it. I'm a person that loves humanity. I accept people the way they are, and I never judge. But I think it's the best thing for Canada, having people from everywhere, that respect each other, and, truthfully, I believe that not all people respect each other, there are many people who hide it and manifest that in different ways, ways of not accepting the others. But to me it's a . . . like, I love that about Canada. I've met people I would have never met otherwise, from different parts of the world, and sometimes I just think to myself, "Imagine if I were to meet someone and marry someone who is not from my country. Would I ever have had a chance in my life?" Probably not. It's only because I'm in Canada that I've met people all over the world. If I were to be back home, then I'd be limited to knowing my own culture and that's it. So I absolutely really love this about Canada. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)
>
> When I hear that word [multiculturalism], I think "Canada," because there's such a diversity. I mean, I am so accustomed to seeing multicultural people from everywhere, I don't see that anymore, to me is non-existent. I love it because—and I go back to my experiences at work—whenever we have multicultural days it's so much fun what you hear and you see, and we actually at work encourage people from different cultures to come and showcase to our residents. I used to have this lady from Jamaica, she would bring her dishes and she would bring a group of friends and they would do some of their dancing and they would be wearing their costumes from Jamaica. It was just a whole lot of fun. (Anila, a woman from Kosovo, mid-30s)
>
> This is what I think, and I always say it: When it comes to multiculturalism, Canada is a textbook example for all countries in the world. In terms of tolerance, law . . . If you say "multicultural country," Canada is where you look.
>
> Ivana: What does multiculturalism mean to you?
>
> Arsim: It means to respect everyone's religion, identity, nationality, respect for diversity. There is no difference between my son or a black person, Muslim, Serb, Bosnian, Croat. I mean, it's especially evident among young people, it's a textbook example. It's very positive. This is why I stayed in Canada. (Kosovar man, 60s)

The question plaguing the issue of multiculturalism has always been about the boundaries: *How much* difference is enough and where do "we" draw the line? The accounts below show that

some of the participants measure multiculturalism's capacity to accommodate diversity according to the degree of their own "difference." In other words, while preserving their own ethno-religious and cultural elements (language, customs, cuisine, etc.) fits well into the framework and does not challenge the dominant culture, anything more than that (e.g. covering your face) pushes the boundaries:

> Well, that's perfect, it's okay, I agree with that. There are some things I don't agree with, but in general I agree . . . I don't agree to the fact, you see, people coming from outside and they're all covered, you see just the eyes . . . I don't agree with that. I know the rights of a person and stuff, and that's perfect, but still you have to adapt to the country where you are going. I mean, if you don't want to, you can stay where you are. I don't like that. Me personally. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)
>
> Canada is not a country that forbids you to be yourself. So for me, the only thing is that you need to adapt, that life isn't the same here and in your country of origin . . . So, for me, hearing stories that people are not happy or . . . I know we don't all have the same opportunities, but I find that if you really . . . I'm not saying to forget where you're from, and just erase your culture and your religion, and ethnicity and adopt the Canadian values. But I'm saying that if you keep . . . If you come to a country and expect it to be the same as your country, it doesn't work like that; and people that will go to your country and expect the same, they won't be treated the same, and they won't have the same opportunity. (Melisa, Bosnian woman, late 20s)

On the other side of the spectrum are participants who find that multiculturalism works only as long as immigrants and minority communities do not go too far in asserting their difference: in other words, as a lived practice, multiculturalism has its clear limits. I identified this skepticism toward multiculturalism among Bosnian participants especially, possibly in part a result of the betrayed promise of Yugoslavia's "Brotherhood and Unity." One Bosnian participant said that multiculturalism is "beautifully designed, much better than in all those other countries," but

> there are levels underneath that tell you, "Wait, you're not sitting on a chair you should be sitting on, you're not what you're suppose to be." It points to people being treated differently. There are rules, it's all designed well, written well, it looks like there's no racism. Well, I wonder if there is no racism? There is less than in other countries, but it still exists.

She provided a personal example:

> My son's girlfriend is pregnant and he wants to give his child a Canadian name, so that the child is not different. Instead of aspiring to, as a multicultural country, keeping our ethnicity—being who you are, cherishing different languages and cultures—instead of broadening ourselves, we're going the other way. Despite what they say about it being an American concept, it's not. This is a melting pot too. You cannot and you should not be different.

Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, likewise finds that multiculturalism makes little difference in the everyday lives of immigrants in Canada:

> I really don't think so, until us immigrants mess up something. And when we do, then it's highlighted. For example, if my colleague and I make the same mistake, mine is bigger. Maybe they wouldn't make a difference, but English is our second language, and as soon as they hear you speak, they literally think you're stupid, that you're not on the same level. It takes them a while to get used to it, but then they're okay.

Despite their diverse evaluations of multiculturalism, however, participants' accounts all concur that the framework represents one of the most potent symbols of Canadian identity. Importantly, it is an crucial strategy of resistance to Islamophobia, particularly for the Albanian participants. Findings from other studies (e.g. Nagra, 2017) likewise show that some Canadian Muslims engage in celebration of Canada (specifically Canadian multiculturalism) in order to resist Islamophobia.

Talking about Terrorism

Most of the participants mentioned that any stigma or negativity they have experienced as Muslims resulted from the association of Islam and Muslims with terrorism. The empirical evidence presented so far demonstrates that most have, directly or indirectly, drawn religious boundaries separating them from other Muslims—Middle Eastern in particular. Since many emphasize personal and group irreligiosity, one might expect their views on terrorism to align with the general public, political, and media discourses that attribute the cause of terrorist attacks

by Muslims predominantly to the Muslim faith. My participants shared the general public sympathy for the victims of terror attacks and their families. However, they questioned both the general public's and the attackers' religion-based justifications of the attacks.

In addition to expressing compassion for victims and their families, Besa expressed worry that she would be associated with terrorists on the basis of her religious background:

> I don't feel like it's my religion being represented. But I feel sad, when people generalize, when every immigrant is bad . . . So I know that's the generalizing part. And when you have to justify yourself, you're not like them, or not everybody's like them, so that's kind of sad. When people go to easy conclusions, I find that sad.

Besa was also the only participant who did not question the religious justifications of the attacks:

> But the truth is some of the most horrible terrorists *are* Muslims . . . It was a Muslim group, it was extremist, it was fundamental. Yes, we agree. But that's also kind of sad—for all religions in general preach peace and loving each other, and it's sad to see that people kill for their religion beliefs. But I also feel bad when simplistic conclusions are presented in a certain way.

Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, described his feelings when he hears of an attack:

> Very bad. It's a very bad feeling, because, according to my principles, there is no greater sin, no greater evil than killing an innocent man. I always say that it is soldier against soldier, he is in uniform, has weapons, this is something different. But to kill an innocent man . . . Imagine I am on a plane home to Kosovo and the plane explodes: what do I have to do with all that?

Unlike Besa, Arsim questioned the attackers' religious justifications. He told me that he broached the subject with Albanian friends from France following one of the Paris attacks:

> This is what they said: these are former junkies, alcoholics who were recruited by someone and turned into monsters . . . They say that these are not students who go to university . . . but trash who suddenly turned into great [believers]. . . Maybe they were a good target for someone—this is a different question—but they don't represent real Muslims who go to mosque, who pray.

Likewise, Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, said that the people who commit crimes in the name of Islam are "not real Muslims." He noted that practising Muslims in particular are bothered by the association of Islam with terrorist attacks:

> It bothers us a bit what happens, because if something happens, it's called Islam, Islamic terrorism, Islamic terrorism: they don't say just terrorism. They use Islam to do bad things. Actually, they are bad people since the beginning, and they do bad things and say its in the name of Islam and they do what they want. The people who don't know the real Islam believe in this . . . You know in Québec, the guy from Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu in 2014, when he tried to kill the police, army, whatever. He had done wrong, you know, he had been in jail, he wasn't a good person since the beginning, and later he used Islam to do revenge . . . They go to jail, they do bad things, drink, do drugs, they are dealers of drugs, and after they say, "I became Muslim," and after they just make terror, you know. This is not Islam . . . Because real people, regardless of religion, a simple person doesn't do that. And the people who believe in God, because in Islam you cannot even lie to people, you have to tell the truth all the time. You cannot fight with people because you know God will be upset with you.

I spoke to Sanela, a Bosnian woman in her 40s, a few days after the December 2016 Munich attack. Despite not being religious, she voiced frustration about claims that terrorist attacks are religiously based:

> First of all, I hate ISIS, and because of what's happening at the moment, because it's so wrong. They're [justifying their actions by religion], and that's the worst case of people that, even during our war, [did that], whatever the religion was. And I hate that, because religion and any of the books—Quran, Bible—do not propagate anything these people are doing at the moment. [N]one of [the innocent people] had weapons and [they were just enjoying a day] that are [is] to be really nice and joyful, more family oriented, and [they are] throwing the bombs . . . or getting into the market with bombs . . .

Sanela also stated that these justifications are damaging to people who are truly religious: "That's shameful . . . and a disgrace towards everybody, actually, who truly believe in true in . . . the book that [they're] reading, whether it's the Bible or Quran, it doesn't really matter." Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, stated that the vast majority of Muslims do not condone violence and that it is against Islamic principles to kill innocent people:

> The Muslim society in Canada is working hard to tell Canadian society that we don't support what these idiots are doing in the name of Islam, like bombing and killing people. Islam is not like that, Islam is actually a very peaceful religion, has nothing to do with terrorism, and that's how it is . . . You cannot blame the whole nation that believes in Islam for a group that wants to abuse the name of religion.

Other participants took issue with the public's treatment of terror attacks. Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, said that the first thing she feels is sadness about the victims. However, when bringing up the 2014 attack on the Parliament Hill, she also decried that

> everybody, without even knowing what was going on, speculated the person was Muslim, like an Islamic terrorist. I could hear it, because I was on the campus. I could hear students, really, talking about him, my old friends. They were talking about him like he's a Muslim terrorist, it's like an attack. And it didn't make me feel . . . it made me feel bad. No, it's not necessarily true; just because you hear it somewhere else, you don't have to assume the same thing is happening here. People have this tendency to generalize things, just because they have one example, they use that example . . . They use the same outcome, the same case, and they just apply it anywhere to anything.

Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, says that when an attack happens, she does not ask who was behind it, but rather how many people got injured or killed. Adela, however, says that the public cares more about who committed the attack than about the victims:

> When an attack happens, whether it is in Oregon or anywhere else, any kind of terrorist attack, the reaction is, "Muslims did it, al-Qa'ida," before there is information, even though it is known that since 9/11 there have been 19 terrorist attacks committed by non-Muslims and seven by Islamic militants. This isn't an excuse. Terrorism cannot be justified, no matter who commits it. But if the statistics tell you that there are three times as many attacks not committed by Muslims . . . Still their association is that Muslims have done it.

While it is unclear which statistics Adela is referring to, her general impression is that different attacks are treated differently depending on the background of the perpetrator:

> If the killing is committed by a non-Muslim, it breezes through the news. It practically goes so unnoticed that barely anyone remembers it happened. But if a Muslim does it, then it is revisited, the origins are examined, analyzed; they're talking about Islamic militants, al-Qa'ida, organized groups. It is evident that the media coverage is different and the justifications are different . . . Above all,

> these are not Muslims, but extremists. No one ever says, "Christian did it." If there is a terror attack, and if it's a Christian, then they look for clues in mental health, diagnoses, what could have triggered and traumatized the poor guy into doing this. And if it's Muslim, it is organized, planned, deeper background.

Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, likewise sees hypocrisy in how the public treats different shootings:

> When the 23 children were killed in a kindergarten . . . no one said a Jewish, or Christian terrorist did it. Only Muslims can be terrorists. This happens, unfortunately, all over North America, a lot of people are creating problems. But the negative connotation always [follows Muslims].

Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, argued that these representations lead to stereotyping:

> When it's confirmed it's not Muslim, I quite often say, "I wish they didn't stereotype," because everybody judges, everybody's first thought that comes to their mind is, "Oh, its them,"—it's Muslim, or it's al-Qa'ida, or whatever . . . I wish people didn't stereotype. But I, being Muslim, the first thing I think is, "Oh God, there's another terrorist attack." This is the first year, 2016, the first year that I travelled and I didn't feel secure—not as a Muslim, just as a human being.

Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, admitted that when she hears of a terrorist attack, she wonders if the person was Muslim or not because she wonders how the public will frame it:

> [I]f it's a person with a Muslim name, then they will exploit that to justify what they're doing in other countries to prevent other attacks. That's what I'm always wondering, and also to see how in the media the person, with a Muslim name, is treated versus the person with an American or Canadian name . . . When it happens to be a person with a Muslim name, I feel like they will put in the religion fact and that they will exploit that to the maximum; and when you hear it's a white person, who was born and raised here, then they'll say it's mental illness. But this person that did that, with a Muslim name, probably had mental illness first, he just [justified his] actions with religion. But I don't think that religion has anything to do with the massacres that happened.

In seeking to disassociate Islam from terrorism, and disprove popular claims that the religion is inherently violent, the participants thus align themselves with Muslim activists and organizations that look for social rather than theological causes of terrorism. While most say they are not practising Muslims, they also feel they are personally affected by the association of Islam with

terrorism, especially if they publicly identify their Muslim origins. By identifying as Muslims, even with qualifications, and by engaging in some sort of religious or cultural practice that has religious underpinnings (e.g. not eating pork, or celebrating Eid), they to some degree also identify themselves, or "risk" being identified, as members of the religion. They thus, just like practising Muslims, feel the need to dispel the stereotype of Islam as inherently violent.

Albanianism against Prejudice

As seen so far, Albanian participants expressed great pride in their ethno-national group's multifaith character. The narrative of Albanianism represents a key cultural repertoire that participants drew upon extensively in their responses. For some participants, Albanianism also provides a psychological shield from the negative effects of anti-Muslim sentiments related to terrorist attacks. Besa, an Albanian woman in her 40s, told me of a YouTube video posted after the 2014 Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris that showed "all the representatives, clerics of Albanian religions that went to do homage. It was like hand in hand—Catholics, Orthodox, Muslims, the Bektashians—they were together and everyone was applauding." Besa says that she was so proud that "these religions still try to keep this cohabitation" that she shared the video on her own Facebook page: "[B]ecause I was kind of proud of the tolerance of my country, but I think that is kind of a good way of saying to people, "Listen, we're Muslims, but look at that." While Besa interpreted the walk as a way of showing that Muslims can live peacefully with others, Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, who also mentioned the walk, framed it as a way of showing that not only that a Muslim-majority country can be secular, but also that the blame should be placed on individuals, and not religion:

> We are aware that the world sees us as an Islamic country, and the government is showing the world that we're not. We're a Muslim religion country, but at the same time we're a secular society, and most recent case was, if you remember, when those events happened in France, when all the leaders of the world went to

> Paris and they made a tour. So our leader came with a priest, an Orthodox priest, a Catholic priest, he was there with the Sunni and Shia, to represent them. He took all these four sects with him, he was the only leader who had all four, just to show the world: No, it's all Islam that is doing this. It is wrong, you know—here we have all these things and it's not the religion that is destroying people, it's the mentalities of particular people.

Conclusion

This chapter showed that participants have experienced the stigma of being Muslim, mostly by being exposed to negative media representations of Muslims, but also in the realm of everyday interactions with other Canadians. The feelings of stigma have occurred mostly when participants identified as Muslims in public. In these situations, the "imported" cultural repertoire of the meanings of "Muslim" as a multifaceted identification confilicted with the dominant cultural repertoire of "Muslims" as religious conservatives who harbour "anti-Western" values. Most of the participants reported that they responded to this conflict by drawing religious boundaries and emphasizing they are not (very) religious, or that they do not practise Islam. Several participants were unable to reconcile the two repertoires; some of them reported that they felt discomfort publicly revealing their religious descent, and one participant admitted she does not disclose she is Muslim anymore. They shared that they typically encounter surprise from others—non-Muslims and Muslims alike—who learn they are Muslims. Most interpreted the surprise as a reaction to their physical appearance (skin colour, style of dress) or to behaviour not typically associated with Muslims (drinking alcohol, eating pork), but also saw it as resulting from most Canadians' ignorance of the diversity among Muslims, as well as unfamiliarity with the history of the Balkan region.

At the same time, most of the participants reported that their lives and their ethno-religious groups in general have not been majorly affected by Islamophobia in post-9/11 Canada. While a few had heard of members of their ethno-religious groups having difficulty travelling,

all said that this was uncommon, and none reported personally experiencing such complications. The Albanian participants tended to rationalize this in terms of their group's irreligiosity and European-origins, while the Bosnian participants were more likely to resort to racial explanations. Most of the participants were familiar with experiences of other Muslims outside their ethno-religious groups, and agreed that non-European Muslims have had a much more difficult time as Muslims in Canada. Most of the Albanian participants, however, said that being Muslim in Canada is easier than being Muslim in Western Europe or the United States because of Canada's multiculturalism policies and cultural diversity. While the Bosnian participants mostly agreed that Canada is *the* place to be for Muslims, they were also more critical of Canada's multiculturalism and immigration policies.

While the participants drew religious boundaries by distancing themselves from religion or minimizing their religiosity, most rejected the popular interpretations that terrorism is caused by religion. In so doing, they aligned themselves with activists and academics who focus on social rather than religious explanations of the root causes of terrorism. They thus contributed to disrupting stereotypes about Muslims and Islam.

This chapter focused on the experience of the participants in the context of being Muslim in Canada in the decades following 9/11. It examined identifying as Muslim in public, reactions and counter-reactions, travelling while Muslim, and feelings about and responses to terrorism. It also touched on the question of "race." It has been argued that Islamophobia is a manifestation of racism, and not only of animosity towards the Muslim faith. In the following chapter, I examine in more detail how participants understand who they are "racially" in Canada's social hierarchy and what sense they make of their position.

Chapter 8

Civilizational and “Racial” Boundaries: Being “White,” European Muslims in Canada

Canada is more ethno-racially diverse than ever. One in every five Canadians is classified as a “visible minority,” a change that Statistics Canada (2016b) attributes to “the number of immigrants who arrived in Canada in recent decades from non-European countries.” This also means, however, that Canada remains a country of predominantly European-origin peoples. While on the surface, the word “European” carries mostly geographical and cultural connotations, it also has racial undertones. “European” is often used as a synonym, or code word, to designate “white.”

“Whiteness” in Canada remains a hegemonic cultural norm that yields important societal benefits (Baldwin et al., 2011; Nicholls, 2015). “White privilege” is a term coined by Peggy McIntosh in 1989 to refer to a wide range of unearned advantages, from everyday to systemic, of being “white.” While her essay focused on the United States (she speaks of African Americans, the likelihood of being audited by the IRS, etc.), the terms have been applied to various Western contexts. Although “whiteness” does not necessary open all doors and break all ceilings, race scholars have argued that being “white” can “dilute” markers of minority or marginalized identities such as gender, immigration status, or religious background (Frankenberg, 1993).

While the previous chapters contained references to participants’ geographical and racial identities and identifications, this chapter examines their positions on Europeanness and whiteness in more detail. It will show that participants distinguish between these two concepts: the former presents a geo-cultural identity and a source of pride and comfort, whereas the latter is seen primarily as a knock-on effect of the former.

Being European in Canada

Many participants either referred to themselves as Europeans to distinguish themselves from other Muslims, or they accepted my external categorization of them as such. The previous chapters showed that several participants attributed their lenient attitude towards religion to their European origins. Several also mentioned that, as “European Muslims,” they have had an easier time navigating Canada’s social landscapes in the post-9/11 period. Given that the Europeanness of (South)Eastern Europeans is often questioned by Western Europeans and those of Western European lineage in immigration settings, I was interested to learn if my participants have experienced this incertitude in Canada.

Most of the participants did not question their Europeanness and felt it to be an important part of who they are—in fact, most expressed pride in being European. However, they did not clearly articulate what it was about being from Europe that made it a source of pride, with the implication it is something taken for granted and understood by everyone:

> I think I see that, like, an interesting link. You know, I feel European, and miss the European feeling from time to time, the way of life, mentality, things that I miss . . . There are some things, and I totally embrace it. I see it kind of makes me different in a good way, unique, and things like that, but I also like the fact I think . . . Québec, its kind of more European also, I find [a connection] in that. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

Gentijana, another Albanian woman in her 40s, admitted that she likes saying she is from Europe:

> I feel the old Europe has the fashion. No, I like to say that I’m from Europe. We have great culture there . . . I think it’s a great place, great history, great place with great people. I usually, when I talk, I say, “In Europe, or in Albania, we do like this, we do like this” . . . Because I feel [there is] a bit of difference between Europe and here.

Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s, said she prefers to say Europe to Albania, because most people are not familiar with Albania:

> Every time, when they ask, I say Europe. I don't say specifically the country where I'm from.
>
> Ivana: Why do you say Europe and not the country?
>
> Vera: Well, because I like it better, saying I am from Europe, than saying from Albania. But sometimes they ask us, "Which language are you talking?" so I say Albanian. Sometimes they don't know—they say, "Libania?" But no, Albania's different.
>
> Ivana: So when you say you're from Europe, do people typically ask where in Europe?
>
> Vera: Yes, they ask. But sometimes no, they ask Libania. I say, no, sometimes they don't know where Albania is, then I say, "Around Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, around."

Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, said that when he is asked where he is from, he tells people he is from Europe "every time"—also because most people do not where Albania is:

> People don't know where Albania actually is, at least here in Canada. I have met only two or three persons that know where exactly is Albania situated. Lots of people don't know. They say that Albania is in Eastern Europe. "No, not in East, it's in the Southeast, in the Balkans." But I say always, "I'm from Southeast Europe, from Albania." One guy once said, "Albania, like in the United States?" You know, there is a state, like Alabama. To Québécois people, I always explain them, "Albania is situated on a border with Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, it is in front of Italy." When I say Italy, they say "Okay."

Leka does not like Albania being positioned as part of Eastern Europe, a common attitude among people from the Balkans who feel that the term "Eastern Europe" has negative associations with the Soviet Union and Russia (e.g. Popesku Schmadl, 2013). While Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, likewise expressed pride in her European background, she admitted that the small size of her home country makes her questions it:

> I jokingly, when we talk about cars, for example, [say that] everything that comes from Europe is a good thing, right, like, jokingly, I've said that . . . I definitely tell it to my friends. I'm European, I do express pride in being European. But sometimes I tell myself, I'm from Albania, it's a small part of Europe, I shouldn't really be proud of it.

While Ariana does not take issue with others placing Albania in Eastern Europe, she did mention that she is sometimes mistaken for a Russian because of her accent:

> I don't know if that happens to you, too, but because of the accent, for me, people assume that I'm Russian. People in Canada, they all come from different countries. They have a perception of East Europeans, and they say, "Oh, you're Russian." But I say I'm Albanian—unless I'm not in the mood to talk to the person and to explain everything—but I just say I'm Albanian.

Maja said that the impression she gets from Canadian society in general is that Bosnians are not seen as Europeans, but as *Eastern* Europeans:

> With many Canadian people, I would say that I'm from Bosnia then they would say, "Oh, you're from Eastern Europe, from Ukraine," and I have to start a war with them to tell them that "No, we are not like Ukraine." But that's the perception that I got from people is that they usually associate us with the Eastern Block, like Russia. They pretty much don't really know how things worked in Yugoslavia, how wonderful lives we all had [laughs]. They don't consider us [as European as] Western Europeans, that's the perception that I was always getting.

Melisa, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, says she feels "lucky" to be European. However, unlike most other participants, for her, being European is more about adding diversity to her personal background, than something that is valuable in itself:

> I feel lucky. It's funny, because when I say Bosnia they are, like, "What?" Then you have to explain that's in Europe, and they're like, "Oh, Europe, now I see, I knew you're not Canadian but" . . . I feel lucky to have all this background, even in [job] interviews I use the fact that I was an immigrant, a refugee, and the fact I can adapt to any situation. I've moved so many times in my life, we went from refugee camps to Canada. We moved a lot.

On "European" Privilege

Literature on immigration, race, and ethnicity often distinguishes between immigrants (and Canadians in general) of European and non-European origins (e.g. Li, 2003). The implication is that European immigrants integrate easier because of their presumed cultural, religious, and racial similarities with Canada's dominant groups. I asked my participants if they feel their

European background has helped them integrate into Canadian society. Some participants rejected the idea of “European privilege,” espousing instead the neoliberal repertoire of the “Canadian dream.” Others admitted it may have aided integration, although they provided different rationales as to the specific mechanics of it.

While Gentijana admits she cannot know what it is like for non-European immigrants to adapt to life in Canada, she thinks it is her education, upbringing, life choices, and perseverance—and not her European background—hat have helped her integrate:

> Well, I don’t think that it’s because I’m from Europe. I don’t know, because I was not an African and came here and I don’t know what to say. But me, as Albanian, I can say that my education in Albania, it helps a lot here in Canada, and the way that I grew up helped a lot. Maybe because we were in the difficult position there in Albania when we first opened with the world . . . [W]e didn’t think too much about what would be expected of us here in Canada. . . . [W]e made [good] choices and we fought for our life. I think [that’s] more that than [being] European.

Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s, argued that all immigrants have the same opportunities and it is up to individuals to take advantage of them:

> I don’t know. Maybe yes, maybe no. Here in Canada you have the opportunity, so it’s the same thing for everybody. If you let it go, it’s your problem; but if you take it, you have the possibility to go further, to have what you want. Canada is more open to immigrants, more equal.

Melisa likewise rejected the idea of “European” privilege. She admitted she might be more similar to “Canadians” than, for example, her Algerian colleague, but only because she arrived in Canada as a child, and not because of her European background.

In contrast, Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, felt that her European origin facilitated integration into Canadian society:

> Yes, because the Albanian mentality is not that far off from here, from the Western mentality, especially in the last 20 years. So it happened to be in the period of change, of transition, when people already have immigrated, and they

> brought back different aspects of the Western world. I knew what was going on, I knew what Canada was about. My father was here before us so he could prepare us for what should come next, what to expect when we came here. So to me it was a small transition. Other than the language.

Sami agreed with Ariana that immigrants from Europe do not have to go to great lengths to adapt to Canadian society. He, however, referred to the tropes of "lazy and dirty" non-Europeans in order to illustrate his point:

> Absolutely, yes. We are workaholics, we work hard, but also we value our life from a different perspective, family means a lot to us, we work hard, but we live large. This is actually the only thing that comes to my mind right now, because we Europeans, we work very hard compared to some other people from other continents. Also, when it comes to our homes, I've noticed that our homes are spotless clean, because of some reason, maybe because of where we come from. As Europeans, we have to make sure that we have very clean house, clean backyard. When it comes to hygiene and being organized, we are little bit different than some people from different places.

The blatant stereotyping notwithstanding, it is interesting that Sami applied characteristics to non-Europeans that Western Europeans ascribe to Eastern Europeans, and even that other Balkan nations ascribe to Albanians (e.g. Nikolić, 2003; Schwandner-Sievers, 2008; Wimmer, 2013, p. 62). It is a fitting illustration of Milica Bakić-Hayden's (1995) "nesting orientalism" and of Wimmer's (2013) "collective repositioning," strategies that push the stereotype applied to one's own group down to another group seen as lower in the social system in order to blur boundaries with a socially powerful group ("Canadians").

The Question of "Race"

As described in Chapter 4, immigrants born in the Balkans (Albanian and Bosnian Muslims included) identified predominantly (over 99%) as "white" or "not a visible minority" in the 2001 census and 2011 NSS. The "white" or "not a visible minority" categories corresponded to a European place of birth, or European ethnic ancestry. The census categories, of course, do not take into account non-geographic elements that undercut "whiteness," such as culture, class, or

ethnicity (Frankenberg, 1993). Academic literature shows that, like their “Europeanness,” the whiteness of (South)Eastern Europeans is often questioned by Western Europeans, or those of Western European lineage in general (e.g. Miskovic, 2003, 2007; Todorova, 2006).

In this section, I examine the role of “race” in the lives of my participants. Unlike their European origins, this was a subject most of my Albanian participants were reticent to discuss. They also tended to flatly reject the idea of white privilege. My Bosnian participants, on the other hand, were more likely to bring up skin colour and acknowledge its social importance, as well as the personal and group benefits of whiteness. They were also more likely to acknowledge the presence of racism in Canada.

One reason some participants may have been reluctant to talk about “race” was the homogenous racial composition of their home countries:

> When we were there, we wouldn’t talk about it because we’re all the same; so there was no talking or comparing ourselves, it was the same people. And here it’s more, I guess, more obvious, so that’s not something I talk about with my family, because there’s no point. If one was to ask and inquire about things, I wouldn’t mind talking to them; but it hasn’t been a topic that has been discussed really. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)

> We are from the one nation, territory or a country, we are all alike, the same, white. I remember, if you’d see one dark-coloured person you would be so happy, [you were] going to touch their hair, etc. Which, here, is normal. (Sanela, Bosnian woman, 40s)

Another explanation for this reluctance is the awareness that “race” is a delicate topic in Canadian society. Some of the participants may have felt that mentioning race would indicate they personally judged people by their skin tone: while it could be something that they do notice, they also might have thought that they could be labelled racist simply by talking about it. For instance, at one point in the interview, Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, mentioned that

Canada's racial diversity made her feel that everyone, including herself, would have equal opportunities to excel:

> And I can't believe I am saying this to you, but . . . black people, and did we see black people home, no we didn't. It was very rare that you saw an African American. It was very rare that we saw an Asian, or East Indian. So when you move here, you see all these cultures and all these colours and things and everybody. I go to the bank and I see an East Indian working there and I thought there's potential for me—that's what I thought when I moved here. Not knowing anyone, not knowing the language, I think that's what made me comfortable—the diversity I saw here.

Anila showed clear signs of feeling uncomfortable talking about "race"—she whispered the first part of the response, and expressed disbelief that she disclosed her opinion to me on this subject. While Anila celebrates Canada's racial diversity, and in part credits her accomplishments to it, she feels that even bringing up the question of "race" and skin colour is problematic. In order to demonstrate her open-mindedness, Anila resorted to the colour-blindness argument. She provided the example of a "good friend that I worked with, for about five years" who was "African American," and of her daughter's good friend in daycare who was also "African American. I don't see it, to be truthful to you." It is evident that Anila does notice colour, but feels that the right way to combat racism and diminish the social importance of race is to claim to ignore its existence. Race scholars, however, reject colour-blindness as a legitimate strategy of anti-racism, and many denounce it as a form of racism that ignores the "privileged and oppressive position" of whiteness (Tsaylor, 1998, p. 123, in James, 2009, p. 134; also Bonilla-Silva, 2014/2017). It is also noteworthy that Anila does not use the term "Black Canadian," but "African American." This could have been a "slip of the tongue." Anila may have had more exposure to the US term—possibly through television and movies that have made the phrase "African American" more mainstream than the Canadian counterpart. However, this may also indicate that "race" is insufficiently discussed in the Canadian public sphere, or that Anila thinks

racism is mostly an American, not a Canadian, problem, a myth often perpetuated in Canada's public discourses (Caouette & Taylor, 2015; Moynagh, 2010; Perkins, 1997).

Who/What Is "White"?

Most of the participants either informally self-identified as "white," or, conversely, did not question my categorization of them as "white." Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, was the only participant who did not claim personal whiteness. In fact, he said he is often mistaken for a Middle Eastern person:

> [T]here are a lot of people that, now, even in my work day [think that] I look like them, people from the Maghreb, Morocco, Egypt. People talk to me now in the Arab language. People say that I'm a Muslim, that I'm an Arab. I am from Europe, I say, I'm not an Arab.
>
> Ivana: How do you feel when people mistake you for an Arab person?
>
> Leka: I don't know. I don't like people to say I'm an Arab. Okay, I'm a Muslim, but I'm Albanian, I want to represent my country, not other countries. But it's okay, for me it's okay. And even because I have a lot of colleagues from Algeria, Morocco, they forget sometimes, they talk to me in Arabic, and I say, "What did you say," they say, "You look like you are one of us."

A few participants noted that it is not their personal whiteness that is occasionally questioned, but the whiteness of their ethno-religious group. While Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, refers to herself and Bosnian Muslims in general as white, at another point in the interview she also referred to Bosnians as "white, or considered to be white, or passable I guess"—thereby acknowledging the ethno-religious group's uncertain racial position.

Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s, did not question her personal whiteness, but did wonder what "kind of white" she was. She observed that the terms "white" and "Caucasian" (a term unheard of in the Balkans[37]) may have different meanings in Canada:

> To me it's funny how race and countries are intertwined, probably mistakenly so. But when someone comes to me for the first time, they obviously think I'm white—like, Caucasian. When I say I'm Albanian, I mention my race—"Oh, they're white from Albania"—and suddenly the Caucasian is taken out of the equation. Maybe I'm wrong: I thought that Caucasian is a term applicable to all white race. I don't know if all Europeans are considered Caucasian, I'm not too sure . . . But to Canadians, only Americans and Canadians are Caucasian, Europeans are not. That's the way I've seen it. They say, "Oh, you're white, but you're not Caucasian."

While Ariana says that "race" has not been a frequent topic of conversation with her peers, she evidently is confused about which category she falls into:

> [M]aybe here and there, twice, since I came to Canada, [my friends and I have talked] about which race we fall under, which category, and then someone told me, "You're Caucasian." I'm from Europe, from Albania. Oh, so you're not Caucasian, and I said, "I don't know, I don't know what's what."

"Race" and "whiteness" are socially constructed categories. Historical research shows that different ethnic groups—such as the Irish, Jews, Italians, and Arabs—have fallen in and out of the "white" category depending on the specific historical contexts (Brodkin, 1998; Gualtieri, 2009; Guglielmo & Salerno, 2003; Ignatiev, 1995). Eastern Europeans appear to still be shifting between the "white" and "not white" categories. Those of Middle Eastern, North African, and West Asian backgrounds, also shift between "white" and "brown" categories—in the United States, these ethnic and national groups are considered "white" by the state, but in Canada they are officially classified as "visible minorities." In the 2011 NHS, 14.2% of Muslims born in

---

[37] Baum (2006) notes that throughout history the term "Caucasian" underwent many changes and encompassed both European and non-European people.

"West Central Asia and the Middle East" and 20% of Muslims born in "Northern Africa" also identified as "not a visible minority," while 34.6% and 75.8% respectively identified as "Arab," which is officially designated as a visible minority category. A significant segment of non-European Muslims thus see themselves as white, or at least not as visibly different from the majority population. At the same time, south of the border, the US government rejected the calls for the next US census to officially include the category of MENA, and these groups will be counted as "white" in the US for at least another 12 years (Harb, 2018).

This ambiguity regarding the whiteness of non-Europeans, particularly those of Middle Eastern origins, was mostly absent from the responses of my participants. With the exception of two of the participants, who referred to Middle Eastern acquaintances as "white," none of them extended whiteness to non-Europeans.

Accounting for the Surprise

While some participants may have experienced the whiteness of their ethno-religious group being doubted, most explained that other people's surprised reactions to the revelations they were Muslims were in part a result of their "appearance" or "looks" in general, or skin tone in particular.

I observed gender differences in participants' responses. As noted in the previous chapter, when discussing other people's reactions, most Albanian female participants would first mention that the surprise was because they were not veiled. This to be expected given that the friction between Muslim immigrants and non-Muslims in the West (underpinned by a series of historical events and developments, p.14) often manifests itself in the debates about the Muslim veil, and, further, that Canadian society in general views the practice (of wearing the niqab, in particular) unfavourably. Emphasizing distance and difference from the controversial practice was the most

straightforward way for Albanian female participants to communicate not only what kind of Muslims they are, but, more generally, what kind of people they are and what values they adhere to. This was not the case for racial boundaries. It was only after being probed about skin colour that these participants would take this factor into consideration, although many minimized or ultimately rejected the possibility of skin colour being the reason for the surprised reactions. The reticence to draw racial boundaries is anchored in the interplay of Canadian and Balkan repertoires. As noted earlier, unlike opinions on the Muslim veil, which are communicated openly in the Canadian public sphere, "race" is a more delicate topic that many—white people in particular—avoid broaching. Additionally, whiteness is a default (and, as such, taken-for-granted) racial setting in Canada, one that "white," "white"-ish, or "white"-passing people are variably cognizant of. Finally, the racial homogeneity of the Balkans and the resultant absence of racial socialization place "race" low on the scale of importance. Female participants had the option to choose between drawing the two boundaries (religious and racial), and Albanian female participants opted for the more socially acceptable one, religious boundary. On the other hand, the male participants (all Albanians)—because the gendered religious boundary of the veil was not available to them—were more likely to bring up skin colour as the reason behind other people's surprised reactions.

Bosnian participants (all women) most readily combined gendered religious and racial explanations. As noted earlier, Bosnian participants arrived in Canada earlier than Albanian participants, a factor that may have contributed to their developing more critical attitudes toward Canadian society. It is possible that the Bosnian participants' openness to inspect Canada from a variety of angles also made them more likely to acknowledge the importance of "race" in

Canadian society. Overall, participants' accounts show that the question of Muslims in general, and particularly the Muslim veil, is bound with whiteness in a very interesting way.

Anila's racial narratives throughout the interview provide a particularly interesting illustration of the discomfort and reluctance ("white") people feel when confronted by the question of "race." On the one hand, Anila presented herself as someone who does not notice skin colour, or think that "race" matters in Canada. And yet, throughout the interview, she made several racial references that suggested she is more aware of the social implications of "race" in the Canadian context than she would have me believe. First, Anila said that people's surprised reaction to her public identification as Muslim was due to her not being covered. When asked if she thought that skin tone may have been a contributing factor to the surprise, she included the racial explanation, possibly because my direct question made "race talk" acceptable: "No, I think those that are surprised are surprised because I'm not covered and I'm white." Either because she truly thinks this is the case, or because she does not want to accord "race" an importance the category does not deserve, Anila ultimately decided that the surprise is due to not "being covered, not the colour." While Anila rejected racial explanations in this segment, she provided one in her response to my question about travelling while Muslim. She said her brother had been stopped and searched several times at airports. To my surprise, given that Anila had earlier rejected the importance of skin colour, particularly in the context of *her* being Muslim in Canada, Anila said that her brother has most likely been pulled out by security because of his "olive skin" and jokingly added that it could not happen to her husband who is "blonde with blue eyes." This response indicates that Anila is aware that "race" is used to decode one's Muslimness. However, she applied it to the Albanian men, but not necessarily women. Besa, an

Albanian woman in her 40s, likewise reluctantly acknowledged the possibility that skin colour played a part in other people's surprised reaction:

> I think that might play a big part. It's easy for people to identify with people they look like, so the looking part might play a role in that. As I told you, they don't even think about it as a possibility, because of the looks probably, yes . . . but also the presentation part. I told you I like being dressed up and things like that. Probably this also doesn't match with the presentation, I guess, and I think we already said that not a lot of them know that in Europe people may be Muslims. For some of them it's kind of a surprise.

Unlike the women, the Albanian men were more likely to explain people's surprised reactions in terms of "race." Recall how Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, described people's reactions to the revelation that he is Muslim—"at first they don't believe me, because I'm white"—and how his former co-worker reacted to Sami's public identification as Muslim: "no, you're not Muslim, you're white, you're from Europe, you're such a good man." Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, also said that non-European Muslims in particular are fascinated that he is both Muslim *and* white. Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, ascribed the surprise of his ESL classmates to his lack of facial hair, but also to his lack of conservative values. However, when I asked him why he thinks people in that class were surprised, given that his values were not evident in that particular setting, he cursorily referred to "a widespread belief that everyone who is Muslim should have darker skin, this is the first misconception." He then pointed at his skin and smiled, somewhat uncomfortably. Vera, an Albanian woman in her 40s, referred to physical characteristics to distinguish Muslim from non-Muslim men, but to head/hair coverings to distinguish the women:

> Ivana: How do you think people imagine a typical Muslim person will look like?
>
> Vera: I think it's with the veil on the head and covered. . . as soon as they see it they say, "Oh, she's Muslim."
>
> Ivana: What about Muslim men?

> Vera: Oh, the men . . . I don't know. But I think it's . . . they are dark, the skin. Usually they have a moustache and stuff. I don't know.

My Bosnian participants (all women), in contrast, were more likely to provide unsolicited racial explanations of other people's surprised reactions, albeit in combination with other markers. Recall Melisa's response: "I'm not wearing any signs of religion and I'm white. There's nothing on me that says I'm Muslim. I am not identified as one." Adela, a Bosnian woman in her late 50s, said that her "crazy hairstyle, my clothing, skin colour" do not match the typical image of a Muslim woman: "They cannot comprehend that there are Muslims in Europe that do not look any different from Canadians." Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, likewise said that people "expect all Muslims to be brown or black." Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, argued that the surprise came either from people who had known she was an atheist, or those who thought "I couldn't possibly be a Muslim because I'm white."

These narratives show that skin colour operates as a religious sign in Canada, albeit a gendered one. For Muslim women, skin colour works in conjunction with religious signs to signal one's religion; however, for Muslim men, skin colour is often the only religious indicator.

On White Privilege

Peggy McIntosh (1989) broadly defined white privilege as an unearned racial advantage, and provided a list of benefits, ranging from everyday benefits (e.g., going shopping without being noticed, seeing people who look like her on television), to systemic (e.g. knowing she was not pulled over by police because of her race). Canadian scholars have noted that white privilege in Canadian society likewise ranges from everyday and social benefits to economic and environmental ones (e.g. Mascarenhas, 2012).

I asked the participants if they though that being white has any benefits in Canadian society. Most of the Albanian participants expressed either denial or uncertainty as to the

benefits of whiteness, some in part because they were not familiar with racial experiences of others: “Maybe, I can’t tell. Because, as I’m saying, I don’t have a name that will distinguish me as a Muslim or, let’s say, I’m not visible like a Muslim.” (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s). These participants were likewise unsure about whether white people and visible minorities were treated differently in Canada:

> This is difficult to say. There are differences, there is always prejudice, it depends on the person. If there is prejudice, there is difference. If there is no prejudice, then nothing. It all depends on the person and their prejudice.
>
> Ivana: Do you think that in this society, it this context, it is an advantage to be white?
>
> Arsim: I don’t notice this. Maybe, but it is not public.

Others asserted that Canadian society offers a level playing field for everyone:

> No, not necessarily, because in Canada, everybody’s equal, whether you were born here or not. Personally, I don’t believe that, especially if you live in Toronto. We are a mixed mass here: we have 200 languages, 180 nationalities, communities—so I don’t feel any difference than being Asian or black, I don’t really feel any difference . . . It cannot be any advantage, again, because if you talk about the small areas maybe, but if you talk about big cities, like Toronto, there’s no advantage whatsoever being white, because as long as you’re qualified for a job or for whatever it is, then you’ll be approved. Otherwise, let’s say if you apply for a credit card, they don’t know who you are, they want to know your income, how much you make, how much you have, that’s it . . . [I feel] like everybody else. Equal to everybody else. I’m not, I don’t dominate. In fact, where we live, I don’t dominate at all as a white person. In fact, we are outnumbered, so I feel like everybody else, as a citizen. (Sami, an Albanian man)

Sanela’s experiences are limited to her scientific circle, where she finds only educational qualifications matter:

> In my case, [race] doesn’t really . . . Maybe because I’m in these educational circles at the moment, and we are all kind of immigrants in Canada, I don’t think that racism comes through our heads whatsoever, and specifically at our job. That’s a very touchy subject, and it’s something that should not even cross your mind. You should judge a person based on his or her personality, knowledge, not based on the race nor the sex of the person, so the person is female versus

> male, let alone everything else—age or any discrimination—I think [there] shouldn't be [racism], or [perhaps it exists] beyond my circle.

When I asked if, outside her scientific circle, she thinks she is perceived the same as, for instance a Muslim woman from Sudan, Sanela responded:

> It's different, I must say. Probably she's going be judged more than I ever would. I don't even get judged. I just kind of get embraced and asked if I'm Italian, or Iranian, or Polish. I've been asked if I was Polish as well, because you can fit kind of anywhere. When you have a particular outfit, etc. then you may be perceived differently.

Sanela's inclusion of Iranian women in the category of women she feels are not judged by their appearance indicated that she feels that in Canada, style of dress matters more than skin colour. As noted earlier, in Canada's mainstream public fora, "veil talk" (unlike "race talk") is socially accepted and serves as an indicator of one's values. Additionally, whiteness remains a potent but taken-for-granted (and unspoken) default racial setting that "white" or "white"-ish or "white"-passing people are variably attuned to. Sanela's prioritizing of veil over skin colour is anchored in all these repertoires. Ultimately, however, for Sanela, merit trumps both religious garment *and* race:

> For myself, did it help? I wouldn't know that. If I was black, maybe I'd know. But it's the same thing as . . . your beauty can only take you so far, but then, your knowledge and your ability to make things happen, make it work, these are the things that actually matter.

For Besa, the key to success in Canada lies in one's personality, as well as in not being overtly religious:

> Personally I don't think that. It's kind of a mix of things, you know? I think it's a personality thing, it's a desire to go towards people and places and things like that . . . And also, what I mentioned at the beginning, I'm not attached to a religious representation . . . but I am not sure.

She credits her personality for her successful navigation of immigration experiences in both Greece and Canada:

> Would it be like that if I was different, I don't know that. But the same things helped me when I used to live in Greece. I told you it was a different [experience there], but I also had the same approach: I work with people, I talk to them, if I believe that the opinion is not right, I try to change it. It's a small part, but I do what I can. Let's say if I was more religious and looked more Muslim, like people coming from elsewhere, I think I would have the same approach.

When I asked Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, about whether she thought being white has benefits in Canada, she responded:

> That probably has something to do—because it's human nature. I haven't thought about it, now that you're mentioning it, maybe . . . I don't know, I don't know . . . Maybe, I really don't know how to answer that, I've never thought about it . . . I mean . . . My last team, I had a French Canadian, I had one African American in my team, I had one that was a mix of Asian and European, and I had one that was native. It was quite diverse. I don't know if that has anything to do with it. Maybe. I don't know.

On Being a White Muslim

Overall, most participants expressed ambivalence with regards to the benefits of being white in Canada. At the same time, most of them also indicated that being white may yield social benefits in the context of being a *Muslim* in a predominantly white society. For instance:

> Nobody is going to know we're Muslim, Catholic, or Orthodox. So, it helps. It helps that it doesn't show what religion you are. Because [Albanians] look like everybody else. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)
>
> The thing I find for me that is easier is that I'm white, I'm not covered, I don't have any religious sign on me. So for me, when I say I'm Muslim, they are, like, "You're Muslim?" or, "What do you mean you're Muslim," and I say I was born in Bosnia. And Bosnia, I try to explain that we were three religions and all that. And for them, I don't find that there's a big reaction, because I'm not wearing any signs of religion and I'm white. There's nothing on me that says I'm Muslim; I am not identified as one. (Melisa, Bosnian woman, late 20s)

Melisa also acknowledges that, even when she is asked where she is from (because of her name and accent), being a white immigrant makes things easier for her:

> I think the fact that we see in the media, all these things happening to people of colour, has an impact on how people see people with darker skin—just because

> [of what the] media show us. And I find that people who have darker skin are more judged, and I've heard—because people don't know that I'm immigrant unless they hear my accent or they see my name—I have friends that say racist things or things about immigrants, and that hurts me more if they say, "Oh, look at the Muslim," or whatever . . .
>
> Ivana: Because you identify more with immigrants than . . .
>
> Melisa: Exactly. I find that people with darker skin might have more issues than I do with religion or ethnicity, because—I don't want to get into a racist conversation or anything—but for me, the reaction that I get when I say my name or my background, people are like, "Oh, you're not Canadian, you're not born in Canada," or when they hear my accent. That's the only reaction really that I have.

Most of the other Bosnian participants likewise acknowledged that whiteness mitigates the negative effects of Islamophobia:

> I think it certainly plays a big role and I'm not going to lie to you. I think being white definitely plays a big role in the perception that people have here . . . There are very few other Muslim nations that are white. Some of them . . . I'm trying to think there was somebody who was really, really white that I met and was from one of the Middle Eastern countries. I think that race definitely plays a big role, being white plays a big role. People here, as much as they want to be accepting of other colors . . . White certainly plays the big role still.
>
> Ivana: Do you think that, back to the question of colour, do you think that it's helped . . . ?
>
> Maja: Definitely.
>
> Ivana: Do Bosnian Muslims sort of get better accepted than others?
>
> Maja: I think so. I personally think so . . . accepted by the Canadian community, but not necessarily by the Muslim community.

Nina echoed Maja's sentiments:

> I think race and racism play a huge role and I think that Bosnian Muslims, because they are white, they're sort of seen as civilized Muslims, because they're European. We're almost not seen as real Muslims, whereas, people who are not white are seen as more likely to adhere to those Muslim stereotypes people have. Even now I think that's funny that most of the time people think that someone is Muslim and they are, like, just Arab and Christian, so not at all Muslim . . . I think that part of racism is the way people in Canada and the US conceptualize non-white Muslims, as you know, adhering to religion and being fanatics and all of that, without realizing that the Middle East and non-white

> Muslims are such a diverse group and they’re so secular in so many countries . . . I don’t know, sometimes I feel that a lot of a hatred for Islam stems from hatred for non-white people.

Adela agreed that their ethno-religious group’s whiteness attenuates the negative effects of being Muslim, while Mirsada went so far as to present the benefits in statistical terms:

> I think that Muslims from Europe are in a privileged position because they differ, in skin colour and style of dress and many other things, from Muslims from other countries and thereby fit in better. Because the more different you are, the bigger the gap between you and your host culture. (Adela)
>
> The situation is miserable here, although I must admit that it is much better in Canada than in the States, from what I heard. When they see you’re white, when you say you’re from Europe, this is all great. When you say you’re Muslim, it’s not great, I don’t know why. I have many contacts and us European Muslims are more or less the same, we are all the same and we get at least 10 to 20% benefits from being what we are . . . I think, this is my impression. I might be wrong. They never show it or say it, but I think we’re lucky to be white. I don’t know why I am saying this, but this is my impression. (Mirsada)

Sanela said that skin colour is particularly consequential for Muslim men:

> I can tell you one thing, somebody who is actually a man, and has a beard, and is called Ahmed, will probably be treated a bit differently than somebody who’s like my brother, who has blue eyes and blonde hair. It’s a perception I think that people get from the TV without actually knowing the facts, without knowing what is actually going on—even during the war—and why some people actually react.

Conclusion

This chapter examined participants’ positions on European identity and “whiteness.” It showed that most of the participants readily identify as Europeans, but also that some participants questioned the whiteness of their ethno-religious groups. While most participants emphasized their European descent, many were hesitant to engage with the question of “race” and often incorporate it into their narratives as throwaway remarks.

The extent to which the participants acknowledge racial benefits ranges. My Albanian participants in particular appeared unsure as to whether being “white” provides them with any

advantages in Canadian society. They tended to ascribe successful Canadian integration to personality characteristics, educational accomplishments, and work ethics, and minimized or unequivocally rejected the social significance of “race.” These participants were also more likely to present Canada as a tolerant, racially diverse country of equal opportunity. They may have felt that acknowledging white privilege in any degree would not only minimize their personal accomplishments, but also tarnish the image of Canada, which they treated with the utmost admiration throughout the interviews. My Bosnian participants, on the other hand, were more likely to acknowledge that being “white” pays dividends in Canadian society, and that, relatedly, Canada has a racism problem. As noted previously, it is possible that the Bosnian participants’ earlier arrival in Canada contributed to this more critical attitude.

The premise of this study is that the availability and success of social actors’ boundary-making strategies are structured by dominant cultural repertoires. This applies to discussing racial issues in Canada. In order for participants’ minimizing or denial of white privilege to be effective (that is, accepted as valid by those around them, particularly members of dominant social groups), it needs to “make sense” in the local context. Furthermore, however, immigrants will also combine elements of their home countries’ cultural repertoires with those of their adopted countries (Lamont, 2000; Waters, 1999). The participants’ denial of racial privilege was thus enabled by interaction of the following cultural repertoires: their home countries’ racial homogeneity and lack of “race” socialization, and the cultural repertoire of Canada as tolerant and “colour-blind” society coupled with the narrative of the “Canadian dream.”

With regard to first repertoire, Balkan immigrants in Canada are officially identified as white, and the vast majority identify as such in Canada’s population surveys. Official statistics on race in the Balkans are not available, but the region’s inhabitants tend to think of themselves

as white. While there are racial minorities, notably the Roma,[38] as well as a general awareness of "race" and racial differences, ethnic, national, and religious categories (not race) are salient in the region. "Race" socialization, to the extent that it is present in Canada and other racially diverse countries, is thus largely absent in the Balkans.

With regard to Canada's cultural repertoire, "race" is a sensitive topic in Canadian society, and discussions of it are often conducted in the context of the country's reputation as a place where everybody thrives regardless of their national, ethnic, racial, or religious origins. Indeed, as Fleras (2004) argues, Canada's multiculturalism framework "pre-empts the race concept as a preferred explanatory framework" (p. 430). As a result, Canadians, unlike Americans, tend to be uncomfortable with race talk and generally steer clear of racialized theories of discrimination—or privileges for that matter (Ibid). Applying this to the narratives presented in this chapter, some participants may have been aware that racism is present in Canada, but thought it would be "politically incorrect"—or even racist—to proffer racial explanations, or admit that being white has advantages, even if one is a Muslim immigrant. Others expressed doubt or uncertainty as to racism being an issue at all in Canada. Albanian participants in particular communicated a positive attitude towards Canada, Canadian policies such as multiculturalism, and the narrative of Canadian tolerance, and were also more likely than Bosnian participants to deny or minimize the presence of racism in Canada. Some presented it as an American, rather than a Canadian problem.

---

[38] According to the 1991 census, there were about 8,000 Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina (0.2% of the population). The European Roma Rights Center (EERC) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe estimate the Roma population to be between 10,000 to 40,000. According to the EERC, there are between 120,000 and 150,000 Roma and more than 200,000 ethnic Egyptians in Albania. The overall population of Albania is 3,2 million. (Popkostadinova, 2011).

Finally, white privilege is bound with the neoliberal aspect of Canadian multiculturalism (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002). As mentioned earlier, most of the participants tended to attribute successful integration into Canadian society to personality characteristics, educational accomplishments, and work ethics, and to minimize or reject the role of race. They thereby espoused the neoliberal narrative of the Canadian dream. While neoliberalism is mostly associated with the politics of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, it is also a doctrine that places ultimate responsibility on the individual and denies or minimizes the existence and importance of systemic group inequalities based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation (Brodie, 2008). Viewed through a neoliberal lens, Canadian society offers a level playing field for everyone to accomplish their hopes and dreams. Albanian participants in particular subscribed to this line of thinking, attributing all success or failure to individual effort and willingness to adapt.

Chapter 9

“External” Boundaries: Relevant “Others” in Canada

The previous three chapters examined participants’ (individual and group) ethnic, religious, and racial self-identification and internal boundaries, as well as external categorization by relevant others in Canada. In other words, I looked at how the participants see and name themselves, how they are perceived and named by others, and how the processes interact. My findings revealed that the “others” who matter in the context of being Muslim in Canada today are the wider Canadian society—“Canadians”—and other, mostly non-European, Muslims. This chapter places participants in the position of categorizers, and examines their definitions, descriptions, and evaluations of similarities to and differences from the relevant Canadian others.

Why study similarities and differences? From a social psychology perspective, “social comparison” is the basis of our knowledge about ourselves and the world around us (Guimond, 2006). Two of the most influential social psychology theories—Tajfel’s Social Identity Theory (1972) and Oakes, Haslam, and Turner’s (1994) Self-Categorization Theory—centre on comparisons between groups. Observing similarities and differences in relation to others is an intrinsic part of boundary work. Sociologically speaking, while comparison serves to create and maintain a sense of order and organization, as well as group membership, it also creates and/or maintains typologies that potentially lead to (re)production of social inequalities. For instance, if a social actor (e.g. Albanian or Bosnian Muslim) taps into a culturally relevant stereotype (e.g. veiled Muslim women are oppressed) to assert either difference from a group (e.g. the practice is uncommon within our group, thereby “our” women are free) or similarity to a group (typically one deemed to be dominant—e.g. “our” women dress like “Canadian” women), the statements of difference or similarity contribute to the stereotyping and social isolation of the group that is

used as the frame of reference (e.g. veiled Muslim women). Evaluating one's position vis-à-vis the social "mainstream" thus provides additional insights into how participants navigate the experiences of being Muslim in Canada in the second decade of the 21st century.

Who Are "Canadians"?

Throughout the interviews, most of the participants spontaneously referred to "Canadians," or individuals who were "Canadian," but I also directly asked participants to explicitly define who "Canadians" are. Their accounts reveal a split between normative and "visceral" understandings of the Canadian identity. In the spontaneous references, "Canadians" were represented as those in the position of power to accept or reject participants' self-identification. For example, Adela's decision to no longer publicly identify as Muslim was driven by her perception of "Canadians"' rejection of her variant of "Muslimness"; the kind of European Maja' was (the "Eastern" kind) and the kind of "white" Ariana was (not Caucasian) were both defined by "Canadians."

In their normative definitions of "Canadians," despite participants' attempts to include most people, the pure, un-hyphenated, Canadianness was limited to the Canadian-born, most often white, Western-European lineage individuals, while ethnic, racial, and religious minorities and First Nations were excluded from this identity. For instance:

> I know we're all Canadians, but I'm talking generations, people that really invented this country and built this country from the beginning. That's who came first to Canada—Francophones or Anglophones—you know what I am saying. Some people that have been here for more than four generations, definitely for at least the last hundred years and on. You have quite mixed people too: you have Albanians who came here around 1930, for the last hundred years you have many other nationalities that have lived here, Italians or Portuguese or Serbians or Croatians. So if you're talking more than that, then you're talking English, Irish, Scottish, French. (Sami, Kosovar man, late 30s)

Mirsada, a Bosnian woman in her 60s, thinks that Canadians are all those who are born in Canada (which by extension erases most Muslims too). Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, first said that no one is a Canadian because "everybody comes from somewhere." But then I asked for a more visceral response:

> Ivana: When you say, "He's Canadian, or she's Canadian," what does that mean?
>
> Anila: I would probably have to say, two or three generations here.
>
> Ivana: If there's an Asian, a Chinese Canadian who is 3rd generation, do you think that person is still seen as a Canadian?
>
> Anila: No, that person is not seen as Canadian, that's for sure. That person is seen as an Asian, living in Canada, regardless. You can tell when you're speaking with . . . I've been often told, "Oh, you don't have an accent," but if you are speaking with somebody coming from Asia, that was born here, you can very easily determine that they were born here based on their accent.
>
> Ivana: And do you still see them as Canadian, or . . . ?
>
> Anila: You know, my first thing to say is, "Oh, they're Asian."
>
> Ivana: So, who's Canadian, then? Who are the people that don't make you think anything else but, "Okay, he's Canadian"?
>
> Anila: Caucasian, as bad this may sound, Caucasian Anglophones.
>
> Ivana: Okay, not the Francophones?
>
> Anila: See, that to me, they're French Canadian . . .
>
> Ivana: There's the "French" there, you can't say they're Canadian?
>
> Anila: And I've gotta say in my defence, they brought that onto them because they identify themselves as French Canadian.

While they mostly excluded themselves from pure Canadianness in their most spontaneous references and solicited responses, many participants hyphenated themselves into the Canadian category when asked which of the many discussed "identities" was the most important to them. Albanian participants were more likely than Bosnian participants to place their Canadian identity on a par, or even above, their Albanian ethnicity:

> I'm Albanian Canadian, all in all, in terms of settling in, in Canada, I really have had zero issues. I don't know if that has to do with me being open-minded, wanting this to work, because you hear from others, oh they couldn't settle, they couldn't do this and that, they went back, whatever the case may be with Albanians from Kosovo. But no, we've never had any issues. (Anila)

> I am Canadian. This is how I feel and my whole family. I won't talk about the kids, they are done with, I mean . . . this is how I feel. I feel Canadian more than Albanian or Muslim. Especially the religion, it comes third, because it has no bearing on my life. (Arsim, man from Kosovo, 60s)

Note here that Arsim hints that Canadian-above-all applies particularly to his adult children who were either born or raised in Canada.

For Sami, being Canadian is not only about citizenship, but about certain Canadian-specific values:

> To me, first you have to be human, humanity is above all. As an Albanian Muslim, I came here with the support of the government and people who were mostly Christians. And even here, when we came, they were Christians mostly who helped us to start a new life: they welcomed us. So honestly, I feel Canadian, and more and more I realize that being Canadian is not . . . Not everybody can do that, because being Canadian means you have a good heart, you help people, and you have to be who you are. So I should say that being Canadian is good enough.

While Melisa places her Bosnian above her Canadian identity, she likewise identifies as both:

> First, I think I would identify myself as a Bosnian, because I was born in Bosnia, but now I also identify myself as a Canadian, because I've spent most of my life here, and I adopted a lot of values that are more Canadian than Bosnian. So I would say, I don't know if that's possible, but I am both—first Bosnian and then Canadian. So for me it's something to be proud of. I would never say that I'm fully Canadian. I have the passport, but I will never say that I'm fully Canadian—because I'm not, because of all the background that I have.

On the one hand, as Mahtani (2002, p. 168) argues, the hyphen produces "spaces of distance" within the Canadian identity; on the other hand, while participants utilized the hyphen, they at least putatively included themselves in the category. Importantly, visible minorities and Muslims in general were erased by omission from the Canadian identity. Their erasure is illustrative of the prevalent imaginings of Canadianness, which continue to present only certain brands of people

as "truly" Canadian, despite the historical presence and contributions of visible minorities to country and nation building.

Canadians: Differences and Similarities

I also asked participants how they felt they were similar to or different from "Canadians." In addition to the responses described above, these narratives reinforced participants' tacit understandings of "Canadians" as at least being of European origin. They also provided insight into how participants draw and rank boundaries with the dominant group.

Gentijana, an Albanian woman in her 40s, gave a general description of the similarities between Albanians and Canadians:

> Those I have met . . . are good people who like to be social with other people. They. . . want to raise their kids with good manners, you know, to educate them to be good in life and to work hard, to respect all the laws and stuff, like we do.

Anila finds that the similarities are in how Albanians and "Anglophones"—whom she earlier referred to as "Canadians"—look, dress, and behave:

> In terms of culture, in terms of, you know, if we go to a gala, am I gonna be seen as someone different? No. I probably dress and have the same manners as an Anglophone. Maybe being from Europe has something to do with that.

Sami's perceived culinary similarities between Albanians and "Canadians" bolstered the representations of "Canadian" as being of European-origin:

> We eat same food. We eat potatoes and rice, they eat potatoes and rice, steak, the similarities are in many ways . . . in general, we don't have too much of a difference when it comes to comparing Canadian Canadians and us, Albanians.

Of course, steak and potatoes are not "owned" by any culture in particular. And yet, hearing "steak and potatoes" in particular invites images of "real," "old-stock," multi-generation, Western-European-origin Canadians. The same cannot be said of "strong spices," which one

participant listed alongside many other non-European cultural markers to highlight Bosnians' similarities to Canadians:

> The similarities are in terms of work, work habits, unlike in all these other countries. Second, clothing. Third, physical appearance, food, moderate spices. For example, when someone from an African country—or China, India—brings their strong spices, they roll their eyes. Hygiene, behaviour, manners, education, technical achievements. Celebrations, socializing, volunteering, community activities—these are all things that are familiar and close to us. These from African countries are totally lost. They have never seen a stove, or a fridge, among other things.

I admit I was mildly surprised to hear the list of similarities because I am accustomed to hearing them enumerated as *differences* between Eastern and Western Europeans. Even more striking, however, was this participant's utilization of stereotypes of Africa as poor and undeveloped, not only because of its racist undertones, but also because similar stereotypes are often applied to Eastern Europeans and Muslims in the form of Balkanism and Orientalism (e.g. Todorova, 1997/2009; Said, 1979). This participant generally decried the stereotyping of Muslims, and yet did not hesitate to portray "Africans," evidently the ultimate embodiment of Canada's "others," as poor and backwards.

Drawing on the cultural repertoire of Albanianism, several of the Albanian participants saw similarities in the Albanian and Canadian respect of diversity:

> I guess the way we dress, the open-mindedness, and the way we respect other people with different religion—and not just religions, but mentalities I guess, different ideas. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)

> I think tolerance is the first similarity. For example, Albanians from Kosovo have friends and colleagues of any religion or nationality, they easily make contacts. So tolerance is the first similarity. Second, it makes a big difference that [Albanians] do not practise religion, a big difference. Immediately, you can talk about anything. Well, not anything—you can talk about any subject without causing anger and offence, this is what I mean. (Arsim)

All in all, apart from implicit references to appearance and shared cultural practices, presumably based on European-origin, the participants did not carve out an explicitly coherent idea of similarities to Canadians. While not all the participants were able to describe similarities with mainstream Canadian culture, most agreed that the main difference between them and Canadians lies in the approach to relationships. Overall, participants appeared more at ease identifying differences from "Canadians" than similarities to them.

Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, was the only Albanian participant who said he saw no similarities, but many differences between Albanians and Canadians; this is interesting, given another Albanian participant's response earlier in the realm of cuisine and family values:

> Similarities, I don't see any. There are big differences, starting from the kitchen, the way we cook and they cook. Now kids are becoming more Canadian—French or English Canadians, doesn't matter—but more like Canadians, because the kids grew up in here, and me and [my wife] still try to resist with our roots, cook in our tradition. The other difference, I don't know . . . Maybe the way of we teach kids, educate kids in our family, we see a difference, a big one. So I can say inside the family, the education . . . the way of talking to them, which is part of raising kids and educating kids, and kitchen and food.

Most of the other participants agreed that they differ from "Canadians" in their attitude towards family:

> . . . because what we see here, it's easy, especially if they're French Canadian, and even English, it's easy for them to break the family. But for us, it's not. Just for Albanians in general, the families are really strong, and no matter what, we try to keep the family together. (Gentijana)

> Relationship with family is completely different. Love, responsibilities, if someone's in a home and has Alzheimer's, they don't even visit. The explanation is that she doesn't know if we visited—well, you know, don't you? Intergenerational respect, although that is disappearing among Bosnians too. I notice it with my children. They do not care at all about relationships with the parents, friends, co-workers. We don't backstab people at work, there is no hypocrisy, and here it is normal. I would say we are more kind and honest when it comes to relationships. (Adela, Bosnian woman, late 50s)

One Bosnian participant judged Canadian relationships in part based on what she observed from her “Canadian” husband’s relationship with his family:

> I think it’s a very, very different culture in every single aspect. When you say “the majority of Canadians,” I’m thinking of decent, middle-aged, middle class persons. Their culture is totally different, but when it comes to our culture . . . as you know, we are like *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, [we like] putting your nose into everybody’s business. Canadians don’t do that, at least in my experience. They are much more reserved, they are much more hands-off with their family . . . I look at my husband and I have to remind him every week to call his mother. His sister [lives in another city]; I think he talks to her once a year or once every two years. Those are Canadian relationships.

The attitude towards friendships was another difference that several participants highlighted:

> When I first came here to Québec, I had to learn French, and when we did it, there were people from all around the world—Latin America, China, Albania . . . We were kind of the same, even if we came from different countries and continents, it was the same functioning mood. We had differences, but all immigrants were kind of different from the rest. At the beginning, when we were learning French. Later, when I was more exposed, going to school, to university, at the beginning, I was, “We have classes together, we don’t become friends? How come?” We used to do teamwork, to get along well and everything. Next session, I was happy to meet the same people, it was, “Hello, how are you?”—but we were not friends, people would not meet outside of school. So the first time was kind of weird. With time I got to understand that it is like, “I don’t want to bother”—more discretion. People here are more discreet, they try not to bother the others. So what I understood is, if I wanted to be different . . . I want to tell people around me, you can call even if it’s 8 o’clock, I want to invite you home, you’re welcome, and things like that. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

The Bosnian participants generally agreed that Bosnians value honesty in friendships more than “Canadians”:

> Different attitudes, behaviour, straightforwardness, honesty—we say what we mean. A [Canadian] friend asked me if I liked her skirt, and I thought, because we were good friends, that I can tell her I didn’t like it. She got all pale. Canadians ask, but do not want to hear the answer . . . [Another] friend came over once and my husband said, “You hang out, I’ll go watch a game,” and she said, “What did I do? He ignored me.” She thought he was ignorant . . . He wanted to watch the game, not sit with us . . . we are more direct and impulsive. (Adela)

> [T]he Bosnian culture, back in Bosnia and Herzegovina and here, is a culture of people who will tell you things you don't necessarily want to hear. So, in simple example, a Canadian will never tell you that you've gotten fat, but a Bosnian will tell you that you've gotten fat even if you had not asked. But they will do almost anything to help you out—if you need a job, they will not wait for you to say, "I need help." They will go out of their way to help you out. I think that my values in a lot of ways align a lot more with Bosnian values, so the meaning of hard work and all those Yugoslav-socialist tenets that were in place for so many decades: working hard and having time to play—but not working hard like 80 hours a week, but for what is an acceptable amount of time, about 40 hours a week—centring your life around family, travelling and seeing the world, and things like that. (Nina, Bosnian woman, late 20s)

These two Albanian women observed that Canadian society is geared more toward individuals than communities:

> The part that I think is most important is individualist versus collectivist society or mentality. First of all, I am a person's people, it's kind of my nature. I think it's kind of also in culture and habits—it's kind of different, you know? People here are more in their bubble. Friendships and things like that, I was used to being friends with people, and here you have colleagues, school colleagues, and some of them, if you're lucky, you make friendships with. This is difficult for me, even after all these years. I think it's also kind of habit. Different ways of working, of functioning, so that's the different part, the most important difference. (Besa)

> I came here to give my kids a better quality of life, so for me, my family and kids, they come first. But what I see in the others, it's not the same for me. They're more for themselves, first and after . . . In the way that we live, I don't know. We think for the future, too, but I think, for them, they need just the present. Maybe it's better, but we're more stressed I think. Because we want to buy houses and cars and have a better life. When I see my colleague [English Canadian], she's still living with her mother; she lives based on her salary. I don't think she thinks when she's going to retire, what she's going to do, you know? (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

While there was a general consensus among the participants about Canadians' attitudes toward relationships, Besa's account below is a classic illustration of how the presence of a "third party" can shift boundaries with the second. She said she realized that she had more similar to French Canadians than she had originally thought after she met people from all over Canada:

> Initially I thought all Quebecers are cold. Then I went to Toronto, and after that to Victoria, for the English immersion class. I used to be with the Quebecers. And people from other provinces and around the world used to come to learn English, and people there used to say, "Oh wow, you Quebecers"—talking about the others I guess—"are really warm, touchy-feely." And I realized they make more jokes, they're really more . . . You know, give hugs and things like that, and I was like, hmm, if I compare it to the others, sure they are warmer . . . The others were more distant, and their jokes and things like that.

Gentijana also found that Canadians in general were "colder" than Albanians, but in contrast to Besa, she found English Canadians "warmer" than French Canadians:

> Sometimes I feel like some of the people here, they are cold. They are not that warm like we . . . There is a big distance between people, but when you get to know them, it's different after. But in the beginning, they keep a bit of distance, until they know you . . . then after depends on the character of the people. I can tell you, for French people, I think they are colder than Anglophone people.

Over all, not all the participants were able to clearly articulate similarities with Canadians—and those who did drew very different boundaries—but most agreed on the differences. On the one hand, it seems they perceive themselves as more different than similar. It is also somewhat surprising that participants did not highlight similarities with the mainstream society as a destigmatization strategy. However, one socially weighty, and yet largely neglected, similarity was the racial one. This omission may have intentional for at least four possible reasons: first, participants wanted to prevent the possibility of being labelled racist; second, participants deemed it politically incorrect; three, participants were unsure if they were as "white" as "Canadians"; and four, tacitly, participants did not notice racial similarity or took it for granted. Regardless of the reasons for these omissions, they stand in contrast to to the evidence of the experiences of non-European Muslims in Canada (e.g. Nagra, 2017), who unequivocally define Canada's hegemonic whiteness as one of the key differences between them and mainstream "Canadians."

Religious Differences

Chapter 6 showed that the participants primarily described themselves and their ethno-religious groups as having low religiosity or being irreligious. The topic of the study—being Muslim in Canada—invited this kind of self-description. When the topic (and, arguably, frame of reference) changed to "Canadians," the self-definitions and comparisons based on religiosity dissipated and other cultural yardsticks took over. Only three participants touched on religiosity when comparing their ethno-religious groups to "Canadians." Arsim, for instance, perceives mainstream Canadian society as indifferent towards religion: "You cannot see any difference between Canadians and Albanian Muslims, absolutely: they do not go to mosque, do not practise. Well, they do go when someone dies, because of the tradition and customs."

On the other hand, Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, (in response to my question about "Canadians") decried that most Quebecers are atheists:

> In my opinion, I feel that people are here, like, I don't know, they don't respect religion. It seems most of them are atheist, they don't believe. I don't see people go to church on Sunday mornings. In my opinion, Québec girls and guys, they are not respecting the religion.

This response is interesting, given that Leka considers himself religious, but not practising (e.g. he drinks alcohol and does not go to mosque), and that he, along with most of the other Albanian participants, emphasized in a positive way that Albanians in general do not practise religion. In contrast to Leka, who lives in Québec and finds "Quebecers" are mostly atheist, Adela, who lives in Ontario, finds that Canadians are much more religious than Bosnians. Her frame of reference, however, is former Yugoslavia: "Back in the day we had civil weddings, while in all these other countries, Canada included, the weddings are religious. It's implied that you should do it in a church, with a priest." The lack of a common thread in Canada's mainstream society with regard

to religion is not surprising given Canada's diversity in attitudes towards religion, which are based on geographical, cultural and other factors.

Who Are "Other" Muslims?

We also talked about interactions with, similarities to, and differences from other Muslims outside participants' ethno-religious groups. Unlike with the responses pertaining to boundaries with "Canadians"—which I, for the most part, solicited—the participants often volunteered comparisons with other Muslims as part of their descriptions of who they are, or not, as Muslim. The topic of the study—being Muslim in Canada—invited this kind of prioritization of the frames of reference. In order to define who they are not, participants used non-European Muslims, Arab Muslims in particular, as frames of reference. This does not imply that participants define themselves primarily in relation to other Muslims. Had the topic been Canadian identity and citizenship, post-conflict relations with relevant ethnic groups, or race in Canada, the frames of reference would have been different (Canadians, Serbs, Croats, visible minorities etc.).

In comparisons with "Canadians," the participants offered no consistent expressions of similarities, and approach to relationships was the most clearly articulated difference. In participants' comparisons with other Muslims, family values figured as the main point of similarity. Religiosity, evaluated externally via observations of prayers in public, (lack of) alcohol consumption, and the practice of veiling, figured as the primary markers of difference. Importantly, religiosity was not taken at face value, but attributed a set of political and moral values.

Similarities with Other Muslims

In considering similarities between Muslims of different ethnicities, Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, found similarities mainly with Bosnian Muslims: "The thing is, Albanian Muslims and Bosnian Muslims are all pretty much European Muslims. In general, we are almost similar; we don't have too many differences." He also noted some similarity to Muslims from Turkey: "which is half part of Middle east, half part of Europe. They do drink alcohol too, moderately—it depends." Several other participants also mentioned similarities with Muslims from Turkey:

> You know, I guess Islam or the Muslim religion in Bosnia. First of all, it was oppressed for many years, so people are not really aware of it—we know that, we have to admit that. It didn't really spark until the 1990s, until the war. Nobody, I think, knew that there were Muslims in Bosnia. Lebanese people, they are pretty comfortable, they are pretty knowledgeable with our background. I would say Turkish people of course . . . There are some Turkish people here and professors that I work with, and I tease them that we are all cousins, we were all good Ottomans at one point. (Maja, Bosnian woman, mid-30s)

> Almost all traditions are the same, religious holidays, circumcision and all that, these are all part of Turkish tradition, maybe because of the 500 years, and the Albanians who went [to Turkey]. The thing is that a large number of Albanians from Kosovo, Sandzak, Macedonia in particular, have relatives in Turkey. My uncle, amidza, immigrated to Turkey in 1957, not by his own will, this was ethnic cleansing, politics. I think they had a positive, pro-European, anti-Arab influence in Turkish society . . . Albanian connections with Turkey were strong. (Arsim, Kosovar man, 60s)

> European Muslims are Muslims by name only. They rarely practise their religion and do not have prejudice towards other people . . . Unlike, this is my opinion, Arabs. I know this, I have many colleagues, and they practise a lot more, a lot more. The Turks are worse than us: they barely practise, at least the ones that I know. (Mirsada, Bosnian woman, 60s)

Sanela, a Bosnian woman in her 40s, found similarities between Bosnian and Iranian Muslims. Importantly, her emphasis was on the two groups' similarities with Canadians:

> Because I celebrate everything, so the only thing they celebrate, they have March 21st, a cute celebration . . . Nouruz. We've never had that, but I love it, and they invite me, so this is great. But most of my Persian friends drink, celebrate Christmas, go to parties. Lots of them eat pork. I don't eat pork, for

> example, I’m used to not eating pork, and actually don’t much like meat to start with. I tried to eat pork at some point and didn’t like it. Why, because I’m not used to it, and I hate bacon, for example. And my Persian friends are eating pork and bacon and everything else. So I’m, like, you’re more similar to Canadians than I am in that sense, although a lot of people are vegan. But in terms of everything else, we all dress the same as Canadians; they just dress, behave, act—everything is pretty much similar. Maybe I [don’t have] friends who are too religious, so that’s maybe why am I connecting to them, because I also don’t see myself being friends with somebody who’s too religious. It’s not that we don’t have anything in common, maybe we do have something in common, but somehow our lives would not fit together.

Although Sanela’s evaluations of non-European Muslims were overwhelmingly positive, an ethnic stereotype, cloaked as humour, found its way into an interaction with a Pakistani Muslim:

> I’m surrounded by them; there are lots of Iranian people. They are super smart—yeah, I absolutely love them. They’re all in science, wow, which is great. I just met this Syrian person, and then another, then another student Ahmed guy who is from Pakistan, his background is Pakistani. And then we were joking, just because he grew a beard, I told him you look like a terrorist.

Two of the Albanian participants found similarities in gender relations between Albanians and Algerian Muslims:

> Today [my Algerian colleagues and I] were just talking in the office, [about] the culture of Albanian women: how they should do everything at home and the men, no, they go outside. (Albanian woman)
>
> So, [our] traditions, like I said, the weddings, or the mentality. Because, like us, for example, when I got married, 25 years ago, I used to live with my parents-in-law, so then it was the same. Now it’s completely different, now everybody goes on their own. But back then you had to respect them; they were the first who can decide on stuff, it was before the same tradition. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

Besa, an Albanian woman in her 40s, articulated similarities between behaviour and culinary practices of Middle Eastern Muslims:

> I work with Algerians, it’s my job to make them aware of different codes and communications, and I often say, “We, Mediterraneans, we touch each other when we talk, but we have to be careful because it might be considered not polite,” or, “we speak loudly, or” . . . I use these kinds of terms all the time. And I really believe it, it’s not only a way for me to pass a message. I really identify with these kinds of things. And when we sometimes do potluck, it’s so funny to

> see we have plates that's kind of the same thing only with a small twist. Sometimes we have the same name for a plate. I find that fascinating. Sometimes there are things that I mention to those people, I feel like we share a lot of things, Lebanese things, I see that very often. I think I see more similarities than differences in general in people.

A key similarity, however, that was articulated by most of the participants was the importance of family:

> You know how there are collective and individualistic approaches to life: [people from the Middle East] are more collective, because they do appreciate family and getting together. And I think we have that too, very much so, I think the Balkans and Middle Eastern people are very similar in that way. They very much appreciate family. They like being together, they are a strong community, close to each other. I think they're very similar in that sense. (Ariana, an Albanian woman in her mid-20s)

> [F]rom what I know, Lebanese Muslim culture and Pakistani Muslim culture, the things they have in common with Bosnian Muslim culture are the importance of family. You won't as often see people moving away really far from their parents, which sounds like not a big deal . . . but I think with Muslim culture, and I think this might be a sort of intersecting of immigrant cultures here too, in Canada. It's just this idea that family is important, with education being very important too. I'm not sure this is like a Muslim thing, but compared to Canadian culture it is different. (Nina, Bosnian woman in her late 20s)

> We are kind of a Mediterranean culture. It is, like, we have the same culture, we are closer. That's why I'm frequenting this kind of people, because when you come here, you see the other people, okay, you're from Albania, okay, we don't know. That's why you try find friends from your side, you know. (Leka)

On the one hand, it appears as if participants found more similarities with other Muslims than with people from mainstream Canadian society. All but one participant identified points of alikeness. On the other hand, quantitatively speaking, participants listed differences from other Muslims more readily than similarities. As noted earlier, other Muslims, rather than "Canadians," figured as the most relevant frames of reference for the topic of the study, and, as a result, references to Muslims were abundant.

Differences from Other Muslims

At the outset of the interview, Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, laid his cards on the table and admitted that the primary reason he decided to participate in the study was to set the record straight about the differences between Albanian and Middle Eastern Muslims:

> [I am participating] simply because it [the study researches] a question which is actually very delicate, the situation. People, the way they see [Albanian Muslims], they don't see us as, let's say, Muslims from the Middle East. We don't have similarities with Muslims from the Middle East.

The principal difference most participants emphasized was in the importance of religion between them and other Muslims. Recall that Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, noted that few Bosnian Muslims identify as atheists and that today, unlike before the collapse of communism, Bosnian and other Muslims are probably more similar in terms of their religious belief and practices. Sami likewise, albeit vaguely, said that the only *similarity* between Albanian and Middle Eastern Muslims lies in their religiosity: "They practice religion. Other than that, I don't know much of the similarities. Even the fashion is a bit different because, again, it may be culture is a factor, so they don't wear the same things." Throughout the interview, Sami appeared uncertain as to how to evaluate religiosity and the associated political and moral values. He described himself as "moderately" religious and Albanians in general as indifferent towards religion, attaching specific moral values to the collective irreligiosity. He then offered religiosity as a common ground between Albanian and Middle Eastern Muslims. It appears as if this participant excuses his own religious beliefs and practices from the general association of religiosity with certain values.

Other participants' comparisons of the religiosity of their ethno-religious groups and non-European Muslims were more straightforward: they constructed non-European, and specifically

Middle Eastern, Muslims as generally more likely to accord importance to their religion. This figured as the main *difference* between them and other Muslims:

> [T]hey are still different, their culture is still a different Islam than what we have in Bosnia. They seem to stick with it. Even coming here and being raised here, being here for 20 years, they want to keep their culture, not only their religion. (Maja)

> If those people are really Muslims and they are from other countries which are Muslim countries, then it's more evident they are because they believe in their religion, and they do things that manifest their religion, right? The way they dress, believe, speak, the way they value things, it's different for a religious and non-religious person. (Ariana, Albanian woman, mid-20s)

> The mentality is not the same because we're completely different. But the tradition too, because, like I said before, I was never practising, but they practise every day. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

Importantly, several participants attached specific political and moral values to (ir)religiosity. For Melisa, a lax attitude towards religion means being more "open" and "Westernized":

> Well, I feel that in Bosnia, last time I went it was 2008, and I feel that, in Bosnia, since we're so close to Europe, I feel they're more Westernized, more open. And the fact that we had a war and a lot of people moved abroad, and they're only coming back in summer, and I think that all the mix of different backgrounds . . . I feel that Bosnian Muslims are more open and less religious than Muslims from the Middle East or North Africa.

For Mirsada, who, as noted earlier, referred to herself as a practising Muslim, not practising religion is related to being less prejudiced:

> European Muslims are Muslims by name only. They rarely practice their religion and do not have prejudice towards other people . . . Unlike—this is my opinion—Arabs. I know this, I have many colleagues, they practise a lot more, a lot more. The Turks are worse than us, they barely practise—at least the ones that I know.

While Mirsada referred to herself as a practising Muslim (she mentions she prays and does not eat pork), she also offered her fashion style (wearing "shorts and mini skirts") and the fact that she is married to a non-Muslim as illustrations of her atypical Muslimness. It could be that for

both Sami and Mirsada, the difference lies in the degree of religiosity and its visibility: practising Islam "just a little" is acceptable because it does not interfere with "European" values, whereas practising "a lot" does.

Several participants described specific interactions with practising Muslims. One Albanian participant told me of a situation with an Arabic employee:

> I did have [an employee], so she was quite religious, and she prayed, five times a day she prayed. So it happened that she had to pray once or twice during her work shift, and we made accommodations—I personally made accommodations. I said to her as an employer, while I understand you're religious, and while I agree to allowing you to pray, take a few minutes to pray or however that works, I said, you must have your phone on. Because of her duty: if there was an emergency, she was the first responder, if a resident fell, or whatever the case may be. Just know that you are at work, and you're the first responder, then you can go pray, take your 10 to 15 minutes or however long that takes, but you have to be on.

While her account shows she is open towards religious differences, she also casually mentions that she has never requested religious accommodations, thereby subtly underlining the contrast between practising Muslims and herself:

> I have encountered many non-European Muslims whenever we had to schedule time off for Eid for those who were more religious. And I'm thinking, I've personally never taken time off because it's Eid. I do the festivities when I come home. A lot of non-Europeans that I've run into have requested time off and it was permitted. They requested time off, and if it was doable and it worked, then, hey, by all means.

It is also interesting how this participant first says it would a "few of minutes" to pray, and then "10 to 15 minutes or however long that takes." As a non-practising Muslim, it is likely that she is truly not aware of the approximate length of a prayer. I nevertheless had an impression that she was also trying to purposefully convey an ignorant, relaxed attitude towards the religious practice. I noticed similar behaviour with other participants, who made seemingly innocuous point of their unfamiliarity with the names of certain religious and cultural garments worn by

some Muslim women and men, and other religious practices. For example, Anila above referred to the religious garment as “I don’t know what’s that called, the overcoat, the long ones”; Sami described Middle Eastern Muslim men’s garment as “something like PJs, I don’t know how you call the uniform”; Besa likewise said she did not know the names of the Muslim women’s religious garment; and Vera was not sure if Muslim women can go inside a mosque or not. This casual emphasis of unfamiliarity with religiously based traditions should not be taken at face value; it signals micro-level opposition to specific values associated with being a (religious) Muslim in the 21st century Canada.

In Chapter 6, several participants used alcohol as a measure of personal and group irreligiosity, but also an indicator of values. In Chapter 8, several participants described being questioned, even chastised, by “real Muslims” because they consume alcohol. Earlier in this chapter, one participant used alcohol consumption as a marker of similarity between them and Turkish and Iranian Muslims. Other participants used the same yardsticks to draw boundaries with regard to Middle Eastern Muslims in particular:

> We are moderate Muslims in general . . . We sometimes drink. We don’t grow beards, like, down to our chest. I’m talking in general, we don’t wear these, what do they call these things that Muslim men wear from the Middle East, something like PJs, I don’t know how you call the uniform . . . but we don’t wear stuff like that. We drink once in a while, we drink alcohol—this is prohibited by the religion, but in general, in fact including even Turkey, which is half part of Middle East, half part of Europe, they do drink alcohol too, moderately, it depends—but these are the differences between us and them. (Sami, Kosovar man, late 30s)

> Compared to me, they are more strict practicants, they don’t drink alcohol—you can find women who never tried alcohol. I say, okay, I’m a Muslim, but I, sometimes I smoke, I drink sometimes. (Leka, Albanian man, late 20s)

Recall that one participant described her parents and their Muslim friends as “liberal” Muslims who would get intoxicated at a local bar following a month of abstaining from pork and alcohol

during Ramadan: "That's something that seems, of course, if you are from Iraq or Saudi Arabia, that is unheard of. You lose your head if you do that."

These accounts show that participants do not necessarily evaluate heightened religiosity in a positive manner. In the case of one Albanian participant, interactions with other Muslims in the immigration-setting modified old and led to new stereotypes:

> Us Muslims from the Balkans, Kosovo to be exact, we used to think that Arab Muslims were extremely moral people, this was our prejudice or mistake, I don't know. When I came here, I saw that many were crooks; they duped me twice when I bought a car from them. We used to think when you say Muslim from the Arabic world, there cannot be deception . . . We thought these were pious people who base their judgments on the Quran, who are fair, all positive. And then in reality you see that they are, well not all of them . . . We had misconceptions, and thought that all those Muslims were real Muslims, good people, just, good, and in practice I saw . . . I am not saying I would never do business with Muslims; I am talking about buying a vehicle or something like that. Twice they conned me, and they knew I was Muslim: I told them I was a refugee and had no money, that I was older when I came here, and all that. I was trying to indirectly tell them "Don't rip me off," and shockingly they did.

He now finds that he cannot make moral judgements on religiosity alone:

> The problem is that all religions have good and bad people, and I say you should see a man as a person, a character. He could be Albanian, Muslim, and be a bad person, or of another religion and be good. Religion is not a measure of things.

While most of the participants associated religiosity among Middle Eastern Muslims with conservative values and backward social norms, Sami's assessment is limited to first generation:

> Even though, in the second or third generation of Muslims from the Middle East or someplace else, they become more what I call Canadianized, they become more modern too, because they have to adapt to the society. But I'm talking about the first and second generation, and there's the difference between the Albanian Muslim women and the Middle East or somewhere else.

Implied in this statement is that Albanian Muslim immigrants are *already* "Canadianized" and "modern."

As noted earlier, most of the participants (some openly, some hesitantly, some upon being prompted) said that skin colour accounts at least to some degree for the "surprise, I'm Muslim!" factor, as well as for the general absence of negative experiences related to them being Muslim. Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, however, was the only participant who responded to my question about differences between Bosnian and most other Muslims by specifically mentioning skin colour and its benefits for white Muslims:

> I think that Bosnian Muslims have an easier time adapting to Canadian culture from what I've seen. But, again, I do think that race is a factor in there, so I think that it would be hard to separate being Muslim from the color of your skin. (Nina)

> They're not the same. They don't have the same faces as those from Iraq or Iran. The faces are different. (Behar, man from Kosovo, 50s)

Given that racism accounts for so much in the documented experiences of Islamophobia, it is interesting that skin colour was almost totally—and as a result conspicuously—absent from participants' evaluations of similarities to and differences from "Canadians" and other Muslims.

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, was the only practising Muslim in the sample who did not draw ethno-national religious boundaries from other Muslims. Rather, for him, the boundary is between practising and non-practising Muslims:

> It's very difficult, because when you say Muslim, Muslim can be anybody. When you say practicant, it's different. You can say I am Muslim, and then go drink alcohol, eat what you want, go after women, cheat on his wife . . . I am sorry to say that but . . . the difference is between those who practise and do not practise, and not between Albanians and . . . Everybody can believe in God, but the point is, when you practise you are more scared of God, and when you don't know, and you don't practise, you can do anything. All the Muslims in the world who practise, who pray, are the same. Because they are scared of God, they know when they die they'll go in front of God. But when you're not a practicant and say you're Muslim, just the meaning of the word Muslim is different because you go on the street, you cheat on your wife, you drink alcohol, you go to the club, a lot of bad things.

Gendered Religious Boundaries: Hijabs and Niqabs

The most salient ethno-religious religious boundary articulated by participants pertained to gender inequalities between Muslim women and men outside their ethno-religious groups. Several participants mentioned the custom of marrying close relatives:

> Muslims from the Middle-East, they can marry their cousins, and for us marrying our cousins is a crime, its filthy, it's really bad, we don't get married to our relatives up to the 7th generation. We have to be far, like 7 generations, to be able to marry somebody in our blood—even then if we know, we don't, absolutely not. So this is one example that we Muslims from Europe hate. (Sami, Kosovar man, late 30s)
>
> Like my colleague, one of my colleagues I told you about, she has married with her cousin, because the grandfather decided that and they had to do it. But I don't agree with that. I had to choose my husband; it's not my parents choosing for me. (Albanian woman)

It was, however, the practice of veiling that figured as the most manifest symbol of unequal gender relations among "other" Muslims, and a key difference between Albanian and Bosnian, and other Muslims:

> When it comes to human rights, we respect our women equally, like we are 50-50 with women. With the Middle East, I don't know, I don't see that as much. I cannot predict. But the way we see them here, women are kind of second class. For us it's different, we're equal. These are two examples I can tell you how much we're different.
>
> Ivana: What are the differences between Albanian Muslim women and other Muslim women?
>
> Sami: Let's say Albanian women. They don't wear the hijab, they don't cover all the eyes and face. There are some Albanian women who wear, like, a scarf, they cover the head, but in general they don't wear stuff like that. And also, Albanian women participate, are involved in all levels of government positions, running business and stuff like that. It's different, it's the difference between them and us. (Sami, Kosovar man, late 30s)

The majority of my participants were women, and none of them cover their heads or faces. In Chapter 6, participants reported that the vast majority of Albanian and Bosnian Muslim women do not practise head/face covering, although they have observed an increase in the practice. It

was at times unclear which garment they were referring to. Most in fact did not specifically distinguish between the two garments, and many struggled to find names for them.

Opinions about the Practice

Most participants voiced either disagreement with or ambivalence towards hair coverings (hijab), while most declared outright opposition to the practice of face covering (niqab and burqa). Some could not clearly express why they disliked the custom: "I know that I don't like it. I don't know why, but I don't like it. This is my opinion. It's their choice, they can do whatever, their life is theirs but I don't like it" (Gentijana, Albanian woman, 40s). Others, however, made their reasons for opposing the practice abundantly clear. Ervin, an Albanian man in his 50s, sees it as an antiquated practice that has no place in the modern world:

> Well, [in my workplace] I see all kinds of Muslim men and women, [how they] dress and act, even the way they walk, I tell [my wife] as a joke, "Oh my God, I saw some families from the villages, mountains from Albania," where the man walks 20 feet ahead and the woman 20 feet back, or women are dressed in those head scarves, burqa and so on.

Several participants interpreted the practice as indicative of an unwillingness to integrate into Canadian society:

> I don't agree [with] the fact, you see, people coming from outside, and they're all covered, you see just the eyes . . . I don't agree with that. I know the rights of a person and stuff, and that's perfect, but still you have to adapt to the country where you are going. I mean if you don't want to, you can stay where you are. I don't like that. Me personally. (Vera, Albanian woman, 40s)

> I have a very strict opinion. I am against it. In every Western European or North America country, I am against it. If I got a job in Saudi Arabia, no one would need to tell me, I would cover myself head to toe. If I moved to Paris, if everyone was wearing shorts, I'd be wearing shorts. I think that people, if they are relocating, should keep their identity, but also adapt to the new environment. I think everyone, this is so obvious, people should adapt to the norms of dress, behaviour, and manner wherever they come. (Mirsada, Bosnian woman, 60s)

While participants were adamantly opposed to the practice, most struggled to reconcile the custom they consider oppressive with the question of personal choice and individual rights:

> I'm just liberal, I didn't grow up like that, and sure, I do have appreciation for those who wear a hijab, if they're practising religion and they have to and want to be covered, if they chose that, just go ahead, I'm not gonna say anything. But am I agreeing with it? I am not. (Sanela, Bosnian woman, 40s)

> I don't question anyone. I repeat again, if we're in Saudi Arabia and this is their custom, good for them, let them implement it in their country. But no one should force anyone to do it. Women who cover themselves here, I am not bothered by it, but I think they are second-class citizens. For no reason at all. (Mirsada, Bosnian woman, 60s)

> Very simple. I don't agree with being covered, especially the ones that cover the entire face, and only the eyes are seen . . . I personally don't agree with it . . . I feel that freedom is taken away from women. I'm a feminist and I feel that women are being done injustice. (Anila, Kosovar woman, mid-30s)

Other participants also struggled to reconcile the respect for personal choice and the social implications of the practice:

> How many people that are head to toe covered actually work? How many people actually: so are just there to raise children, and I don't associate with that. So that's all it is, I think that we're pretty much equal, and as men and women should be equal, and I think we should be allowed to do anything that a man does, and that's the major comment I have against being covered more than anything else. (Sanela)

The responses of Arsim, a Kosovar man in his 60s, in particular illustrate the tension between wanting to respect a woman's right to choose, and the perceived social implications of the practice. Arsim touched on Kosovo's ban on hijabs in schools: "Everyone should have the right to wear the hijab, and not use bans, policing, this is totally wrong, in my opinion." Arsim told me of an incident in New York City where a woman (whom he judged to be of Albanian Muslim background because of her name) attacked a hijab-wearing Muslim woman who was pushing a stroller:

> What was this for? She was arrested immediately. If she has the right [to wear it], guaranteed by the Constitution . . . She didn't have a hijab, only a scarf. She was arrested and is in jail. What I am trying to say is that these small incidents create big problems and are counterproductive.

However, Arsim says that the choice to cover herself should not be extended to the face:

> No, I am against this. To cover your whole face, this isn't according to the Quran. Quran does not mention this anywhere. Hair is one thing, face another. When I say "covering," I mean the hijab. Muslims who come here should accept the culture. If laws allow anything, what is the point of them? You have to accept the laws.

I asked him if I a woman who says she chooses to cover her face should be allowed to do so:

> You should let her. If this is her choice, if the law permits it, you should let her. If the constitution allows it. I often tell people here, "Why are you making an issue out of this?" I guarantee you cannot find more than 20 to 30 women who cover their faces.

Arsim, however, ultimately believes that it is unlikely that women who cover their faces can truly choose the practice: "These women have no strength, they have nothing, they don't participate, they don't decide anything. What can you say to a woman who is semi-literate, who's at home all day, and sometimes go outside. I think it is very wrong." Anila, a Kosovar woman in her mid-30s, likewise questioned the underpinnings of the choice to cover herself:

> I think that it's not a choice. They have done it, generation upon generation, so that now no one takes it upon themselves to fight for their rights or to fight to have it removed. I don't know if they're shunned if they do it, or what happens to them, but it's just something that they do. I don't think that it's a matter of choice.

Sami, a Kosovar man in his late 30s, likewise grants the possibility of choice to cover one's hair, but not the face. He sees the niqab as a cultural and patriarchal, and not a religious, tradition:

> I personally don't think feel comfortable. I'm going to be honest with you as a Muslim, because even based on the Quran, you don't have to cover your face. You can cover your head, no problem, but covering the face is not necessary, and whoever says that it is by the book, they are purely lying. It's more of a

> culture thing or probably the husband is jealous, I don't know, I'm not too not sure.

Sami also framed the niqab as a potential security issue:

> But honestly, and it is not good to judge, but I don't feel comfortable, I don't like that, it's not necessary. So I actually supported France when they took off the niqab: you can cover your head, but not necessarily cover your face, especially these days when you don't know who is walking in your mall or onto your bus, because it happens when people cover themselves as a woman and bad things happen. So I like to see the face, because you can practise religion by covering your head and not necessarily the face.
>
> Ivana: So, do you think that Canada should also ban face coverings, like France did?
>
> Sami: I would support our government, absolutely 100%.

Sanela, a Bosnian woman in her 40s, likewise rejects the argument that any kind of covering is a religious requirement:

> I don't think there is anything in the Quran that says that you should be covered, period. There is one statement maybe that says that you should cover your *mjesta stida* [private parts], which is associated with Adam and Eve, who were covering their private parts, and that's it, that doesn't mean you have to be covered.

Melisa's response illustrates the tension between the duty to respect individual rights and choices, and her personal preference for secularism:

> Honestly, I'm trying to think of religion as, like, everyone can practise whatever religion the person wants, but as long as it's in private. All the signs, religious signs, like the scarf or any other signs, for me, if the person wants to dress up like that, it's her choice, and I respect that. But I don't have an opinion if it should be banned, like in France, in public places or things like that, so I'm not sure that I approve.

Several participants took issue with the practice among children:

> And kids, girls, my daughter's age, [that] would start covering their heads at 10, and, I mean, why are you doing this, you're such a beautiful little girl, why are you doing this? (Anila)

> I always wonder if it's by choice or because it was imposed on them, I don't mind that they wear scarves, the only thing I sometimes ask questions is that when I see little girls wearing them, why is she wearing it? Can she have the choice, because I don't think at the age of four or five they can make a choice for themselves, so why is she wearing it? Why does she have to explain to other kids in daycare that she has to wear this scarf in public? . . . I feel that living in Canada, there so many possibilities and opportunities, so if it's not your choice, why are you wearing it? (Melisa, Bosnian woman, late 20s)

Most of the participants have had limited interactions with women who cover their hair. They did not have any interactions with women who cover their faces. One Bosnian participant described her interactions with a co-worker:

> So we have a person who works here . . . she is from Syria, so she wears a hijab, she has a covered head, she's not dressed like everybody else. But nobody does anything bad towards her, or treat her any differently than they would treat me. There are things maybe, the only way we would treat her differently is when we go drinking, and we joke about it—so you're going have, what, a Virgin Mary or whatever?

While she and her coworkers have resorted to (offensive?) humour to break the ice with the hijab-wearing co-worker, the participant admitted that the practice has created somewhat of a social barrier between them:

> Because she's covered, maybe I don't talk to her about some topics, and I don't ask her how she feels about it, because I believe the faith she believes, she's comfortable with who she is, and what she believes in, that's all I know about her. And she doesn't care, she puts on, like, a blue and white hijab, she is happy about it, she plays with it in her own way. Canada's nicer about it than many other countries probably are.

Nina, a Bosnian woman in her late 20s, was the only participant who viewed the very questioning, debating, and sanctioning of what women—but not men—wear, as hypocritical and indicative of *Canadian* patriarchal social norms:

> I think that, as a human being, I think that's ridiculous; as a feminist, I think it's offensive and misogynistic. You don't often hear debate about what men are supposed to wear in the public sphere, but you still often hear what women are supposed to wear in the public sphere. I personally would never wear a hijab or a niqab, or anything like that, but to hear people make the argument that that's

> somehow more oppressive than what women are expected to wear in this culture when they go out on a Friday night is a little bit ridiculous. I think it's nobody's business, but everyone is making it their business.

The evaluations of similarities and difference vis-à-vis Muslims outside their ethnic groups show that many participants tapped into the socially dominant Orientalist stereotypes to construct most non-European Muslims as not only highly religious, but also holding values that are antithetical to Canadian identity. Gender equality was represented as a social value cherished by participants and mainstream society alike. Only one participant mentioned practices within their own communities that are indicative of unequal gender relations, namely, that Albanian women "should do everything at home and men, no, they go outside." Importantly, gender *inequality* in *mainstream* Canadian society was erased by omission and thereby represented as a non-issue. The implicit casting of "us" and "our" women as free of gender oppression by emphasizing gender inequalities of minority groups, Muslims in particular, is a strategy noted by several scholars of race relations (e.g. Jiwani 2006, p. 133; Thobani, 2007, p. 108). In fact, as Yeğenoğlu (1998) observes, "the declaration of an emancipated status for the Western woman is contingent upon the representation of the Oriental woman as her devalued other" (p. 105). On the one hand, as immigrants, Muslims, and "dubious" Europeans, aligning with dominant narratives concerning Muslims, one to which they feel they are an exception, presents an effective way of "compensating" for their social shortcomings. However, what seemingly balances the stereotypes is the emphasis on cultural similarities with other Muslims. The positive evaluations, however, were expressed mostly as a result of direct questions, while negative comparisons were provided spontaneously. This indicates that it is the latter that are more likely to come up in day-to-day interactions, and thereby bolster existing stereotypes.

Social Networks and Ethno-Cultural Preferences

Previously in the chapter, I examined participants' opinions of Canadian "others" who were found to be relevant in the context of the study: wider Canadian society, "Canadians," and Muslims outside their ethnic groups. I asked them to compare themselves with these relevant "others" and thereby delineate who they are, or not.

This final section of the empirical evidence details participants' narratives about who their friends are, and which ethnic, religious, or cultural groups they feel closest to. While most said that co-ethnics are in the first circle of friends, most also emphasized that they have friends from all cultures. Eastern European and "Mediterranean," mainly Southern European ethnics such as the Greeks and Italians, figured as the groups they feel most similar to. Interestingly, given that throughout the interviews participants went to great lengths to disassociate themselves from other Muslims, particularly their religiosity, several did mention cultural similarities with immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East.

Leka, an Albanian man in his late 20s, stated that few of his friends are Albanians, and most come from "Mediterranean" cultures:

> Yes, the Maghrebian culture, people from Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia . . . We are kind of a Mediterranean culture, it is like we have the same culture, we are closer, that's why I'm frequenting this kind of people. Because when you come here, you see the other people—okay, you're from Albania, okay, we don't know—that's why you try find friends from your side, you know.

While Besa's immediate circle of friends consists of Albanians from Albania, she also befriends people from other cultures:

> I work with immigrants, so I meet people from all around the world, in my private life and everything. I have a group of friends that are almost the same age as me and my husband, and I used to know some of them in Albania, a long time ago, but we found each other here so it's our group of close friends, Albanians. But other than that, I have friends from Greece. I have a sentimental

> link with the place I used to stay for nine years, and have my kids there and everything, some are Quebecers, some of my friends are French from France who live in Québec. I have friends from Africa. It's never the reason to choose friendship, it's who we will be in contact or who we will have points in common with—that's the only criteria. (Besa, Albanian woman, 40s)

> In terms of my social life, I have a huge number of friends who are Albanians from Kosovo and Albania. I do have friends, very close friends, from Cyprus; another close friend of mine is French Canadian; I have friends, Anglophone friends for example, and I use the term Anglophone just to make a differentiation, they too come from somewhere. One of my friends, her father is from Spain and her mother is from England; she was born here. The other is Irish blood; another friend of mine is from Denmark. (Anila)

While she admits her friends are mostly European, Anila says she was attracted to their personalities, and not their ethnicities:

> Some of their parents are from Europe, born in Europe, but they were born here. All in all, if I am to analyze, everyone would be from Europe. And you know what? Here's the thing: it's not that I'm looking for friends that are from Europe, or that I'm looking for friends that are Albanian, or that are Muslim. All my friends, the first thing that attracted me to them—as an immigrant, I have to make friends here. I didn't come with friends. So, it was their personalities that attracted me and their values, not the religion, not the race, not the nationality: it was their personality. Once I got along with them and once I had something in common, then the friendship just flourished and then you find out they're from here and there. (Anila)

An Albanian participant told me that she works with immigrants and that she *rationally* tries to find something in common with everyone she interacts with, focusing on similarities rather than differences. However, viscerally, she feels closest to Southern Europeans:

> But it's kind of funny, every time I see a European, Greeks, and Italians, their communities here are more solid, they exist. It feels like home, even if it's not, because it's near. We used to learn and see films and music, Italian, before, when we were isolated and everything, and listening to Italian songs feels like home. Or Greek, because we used to live there—anything Mediterranean for that matter. We Mediterraneans understand ourselves, in the kitchen part, in the family references. There are some things when it's easy to say, "Oh yeah, I feel like you, you feel like me." We are similar in that, but we're different immigrant groups, you know.

Gentijana likewise feels most comfortable with Southern Europeans, but also non-European “Mediterraneans”:

> In my job, you know, with the colleagues and friends that I had, I had more in common with Italians, Greeks, Moroccans than with French Canadians or Anglophone Canadian. It’s mostly people immigrants, they came . . . even they were born here. Italians, I have friends, Italians, they were born here. I can feel very, very close with them, with Greeks. I can feel very, very close with them. We have kind of the same tradition, the same culture, the same way of doing things. But with French Canadians a bit less and Anglophones as well. But still, it’s better with Anglophones.

Vera said that her closest friends and the ethnic groups she feels closest to are immigrants from Europe (“Romanians, Bulgarians, Polish, Russian”), who she feels understand the migration experience:

> Could be because when you are not in your country, you immigrate somewhere, maybe you’re attached to your family and you try to survive . . . I remember when we came to Canada, we landed in Toronto first . . . So you have to adapt with society where you’re going. But I think that it’s not easy when you first come inhere, and you work a lot and you study a lot, to have a better life. That’s why I think that all the immigrants from Eastern Europe are all the same.

Ariana says that the experience of migration made her realize how similar her culture is to other Balkan cultures, something she had never noted before:

> It’s funny because I was thinking about that just a few days ago, just for the fun of it—well, it’s obvious to me, it’s obvious—those cultures that are very close, like, in the geographical sense, if you know what I mean, Bosnian, Serbian, Croat, despite the history, we are very close, very similar, like Macedonians, Romanians, we’re very close. It’s crazy, like, because when I was back home, when I would meet people from those countries, I never thought it. But now that I’ve seen them, it’s amazing, it strikes me how close we are culturally, much more the same, they’re talking about, I don’t know, *burek*. Yeah, in my country too—oh, we’re so close. (Ariana)

Maja also listed mainly South(Eastern) Europeans and Middle Easterners as groups she feels most at ease with:

> Honestly I have a really large number of friends from different ethnic backgrounds . . . Just to give you an idea, we were having a barbeque at our place and there were ten adults speaking eight different languages, eight different backgrounds . . . we are the same as Bulgarians, Romanians, Czechoslovakians, Hungarians I think too, Greek depending if they are from the Macedonian region, we are the same. I think that's really, that group . . . I find very easy communication in my job. I work with all kinds of different ethnicities and I find very easy communication with Middle Eastern people, Egyptians, Iraq, Iran, professors, those are my clients. I can establish that relationship very easily, maybe because my cultural background helps me in that. (Maja)

Interestingly, Mirsada feels closest to Bosnians, but also Germans, because of their work ethic.

Besim, a man from Kosovo in his mid-30s, is a practising Muslim and the only participant who did not draw ethno-national religious boundaries. For him, as noted previously, the only relevant distinction is one between practising and not-practising Muslims. Interestingly, however, given the importance of religion in his life, his closest circle of friends consists of non-practising Albanian Muslims:

> To tell you the truth, my friends, they are not practicants. They are Albanians, but they are not practicants, they are just Muslims. As I said, you can be Muslim, but you can drink, you can do everything. My friends are like this. Okay, I don't mind, it's their decision. They're my friends, I help them, they help me. It's their decision, to be religious, or not.

While it is acceptable for Besim to befriend people who do not practise religion, he could not be friends with atheists:

> I can talk to them. At my job I have an atheist, when he comes to talk about religion, I actually don't talk, he doesn't understand. We talk about things in general, but nothing else . . . He's Canadian.
>
> Ivana: And would you be friends with someone who is not Muslim but believes in God?
>
> Besim: Yes, of course . . . For me, for my religion, my brother can be a Serbian man if he's Muslim. If he's Muslim, he can be my brother who I can trust more than an Albanian who is not Muslim. Because he believes in the same God that I believe. He doesn't think bad things about other people.

Conclusion

This final findings chapter examined how participants compared themselves with relevant "others" in the Canadian context. As the previous chapter revealed, the primary "actors" in participants' narratives were "Canadians" and "other," mainly non-European, Middle Eastern Muslims. This chapter examined who participants saw as "Canadians; how similar to and different from Canadians and other Muslims the participants are; and which ethno-cultural groups they are closest to.

The first finding was that "Canadians" are understood to be, at the very least, people born in Canada, and most prominently those of Western-European lineage. Participants included themselves in the category mainly via hyphenation. Importantly, ethno-racial and religious minorities were tacitly excluded from the Canadian identity (erasure by exclusion).

Based on the theoretical framework, it was expected that participants would emphasize similarities with the mainstream, dominant group with the most social power ("Canadians"). It was also expected they would emphasize differences from "other," specifically Middle Eastern Muslims, who represent the central "Muslim" frame of reference that the dominant group draws social knowledge (and stereotypes) from. However, these expectations were only met to a certain extent. While participants were able to sketch out similarities with mainstream Canadian society, the accounts had no dominant or consistent thread. In contrast, most of the participants clearly articulated how their ethno-religious groups differed from "Canadians"—mainly in the area of family relationships and friendships. Overall, participants had difficulty comparing themselves with "Canadians." Importantly, the evaluations of similarities and differences were, for the most part, solicited by me, rather than offered voluntarily and spontaneously.

In the context of the subject of the study, “other” Muslims figured as the central frame of reference in relation to who participants defined they are—or rather who they are not. Throughout the interviews, participants made frequent, unprompted references to Muslims from the Middle East in particular, specifically in relation to religiosity and the associated political and moral values. In this chapter too, when I directly asked the question about similarities and differences, participants affirmed their view of most other Muslims as significantly more devoted to their faith. Ethno-national gendered religious boundaries figured prominently in the accounts of most of the participants—most questioned or were opposed to the practice of veiling, the covering of face in particular. Importantly, references to gender inequality within their ethno-religious groups and mainstream Canadian society were notably missing.

Participants were also able to index more similarities to other Muslims than to Canadians—interestingly, in the area in which they found they differed most from Canadians, that is, family relations and friendships. “Mediterranean” Muslim cultures—customs, culinary traditions, demeanour—were also notably present in the descriptions of those ethnic groups that participants’ feel most similar to, even though Southeastern and Eastern European ethnic groups prevailed in those narratives. Importantly, however, the similarities with other Muslims were enumerated only when I specifically asked, while the differences were provided spontaneously throughout the interview. As observed in the earlier chapters, it is the differences from other Muslims that are most frequently communicated with the wider Canadian society and that serve as principal yardsticks for defining who, and what kind of Muslims, participants are and are not.

Finally, what was conspicuously missing from all directly solicited comparisons and evaluations of similarity and difference was the question of race. Given the European-origin of the majority of Canadians, as well as the importance of European identity to the majority of

participants, clear references to “Europeanness” as a point of commonality between the two were absent, although discreetly hinted to. It could be that mainstream Canadians are seen more as North Americans than Europeans (e.g. one participant cherishes Montreal as more European than other Canadian cities which were deemed to be more “American’), or that participants, aware of the precarious nature of their always-Easternized and always-hyphenated European identity, truly did not give importance to their common European descent. It is, however, interesting that references to racial (whiteness) similarities with the dominant groups were conspicuously missing in comparisons with both “Canadians” and other Muslims, particularly given the numerical and cultural hegemony of “whiteness” in Canada, and the fact that Islamophobia has been a question of not only religious, but also racial difference. On the one hand, it could be that some participants question their racial similarity with the majority culture; references to Bosnians “considered to be white,” uncertainty as to whether Albanians are “white or Caucasian,” and one participant’s inclusion in the Arab category all speak to that. On the other hand, the majority of participants did not express these doubts: they either self-identified as “white,” or, conversely, did not question my categorization of them as “white.” I argue that the racial similarity/difference was erased by omission both consciously (in order to maintain social desirability and avoid being deemed racist or politically incorrect), and subconsciously (because participants took racial similarity for granted, and thereby did not accord social importance to racial differences).

Chapter 10

Conclusion

In this final chapter, I take a step back to reflect on the findings of the thesis. I analyze and interpret these in the context of the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 2. Finally, I take stock of the thesis's limitations and provide recommendations for new venues for research.

The objective of the thesis was to learn about the experiences of Canadian Muslim immigrants from the Balkans in the post-9/11 context. The following questions guided the research process: How have Albanian and Bosnian Muslims in Canada responded to the post-9/11 stigmatization of Muslims—more specifically, what boundary-making strategies have they employed? Which Canadian groups are relevant in Balkan Muslims' construction of boundary-making/destigmatization strategies? How have they positioned and defined themselves in relation to them? Which national and cultural repertoires have they resorted to?

Disidentification from Religious Identification as the Principal Boundary-Making Strategy

In a comparison of the 2001 and 2011 Canadian population censuses, I found that in 2011 there was a significant decrease in the percentage of Muslims born in the Balkans, and a significant increase in the percentage of those who identify as following no religion, most prominently among the Albania-born immigrants. While some of the decline could be explained by the general move towards irreligiosity among Canadians at large (Statistics Canada, 2015a), most of the rise in the "no religion" category seems to have occurred at the expense of Muslim, rather than Orthodox Christian or Catholic, identification. I postulated that a significant portion of Muslim-background immigrants born in the Balkans responded to the post-9/11 realities by

disidentifying from the religious identification. The analysis of the 2013 GSS on Social Identity also showed that, in terms of religiosity levels of Muslims born in versus outside the Balkans, Balkan Muslim immigrants are less religious than Muslims born outside Albania, Bosnia, and Kosovo.

My qualitative findings showed that Islamophobia has not significantly affected participants' lives. This was true for most of the participants, irrespective of their ethnic origin, gender, or age. While most said they did not experience discrimination, both Albanian and Bosnian participants did report being subjected to anti-Muslim microaggressions and/or feeling discomfort (stigma) identifying as Muslim in public. The main overt strategy that participants employed to cope with Islamophobia was to draw religious boundaries following ethno-national lines. They did this by distancing or disidentifying from Muslim religious identification and/or Islam religion in general, as well as from Muslim-majority ethnic groups and nationalities typically associated with Muslims, namely Arabs.

The evidence from quantitative and qualitative analyses suggests that the decrease in the Muslim category, and the increase in the "no religion," category in the 2011 census may be the result of a distancing and/or disidentification from Muslim identification and religion among Muslim-origin immigrants from the Balkans. I argue that the disidentification has occurred because of a dissonance between the cultural repertoires of the meanings of "Muslim" in the Balkans and Canada/West. While the former is anchored in the histories of Albanian and Bosnian Muslims, the latter is informed by the global realities of Muslims in the 21st century. The participants viewed themselves as what Merdjanova (2013) referred to as "sociological Muslims": "people who self-identify on the basis of a variety of factors: beliefs and practices, cultural tradition, family background, or ethnic or national identity . . . Muslims can be observant

or non-observant, they can practise their religion regularly, occasionally, very rarely, or not practise at all" (p. xv). The pre-eminence of the myth of Albanianism—which not only prioritizes ethnic and national over religious identities, but also fosters a discourse of indifference to religion—contradicts the dominant Canadian, and more generally Western, imagery of Muslims as deeply attached to Islam, and *as such* sympathetic towards terrorism and opposed to "Canadian" and "Western" political and moral values. This homogenous image of Muslims likewise conflicts with Bosnian Muslims' diverse understandings of the word "Muslim," which encompass not only religious, but also ethnic and national identifications. In order to circumvent the social consequences of being assigned to a stigmatized group, the participants have chosen to "simply" distance themselves from it.

Wimmer (2013, p. 55) notes that the strategy of disidentification (he labelled it "contraction") is used by "Asians" of Chinese descent in California, who prefer to disassociate from the Japanese and for whom the inter-ethnic distinctions are more relevant. He also refers to Londoners of Pakistani descent who disassociate from the South-Asian category and emphasize lower-level distinctions (Ibid). Mary Waters (1999) likewise observed that first-generation middle-class immigrants from the Carribean—in efforts to escape the stigma of being associated with being "black" in the United States—disidentify from the black category and emphasize national identities. Unlike these communities, however, which did not themselves employ state-imposed identifications prior to migration, the participants of this study and their groups, Bosnians in particular, *did* previously identify as Muslims; in their case, the identification remained the same, but the dominant meanings attached to it changed. Also, while in the homeland context, the term "Muslim" applied mostly to members of one's own ethnic group, in

the immigration setting, the label applies to many different ethnic and national groups with disparate historical and religious trajectories.

Wimmer (2013) argued that the strategy of disidentification is especially attractive to those who do not have “access to the centres of a political arena and whose radius of action remains confined to immediate social spaces” (p. 55). This is certainly true in the case of the participants. Although Albanian and Bosnian Muslims are immigrants and ethno-cultural minorities with limited social power, and in a “minority within a minority” position, they have endeavoured to at least familiarize mainstream Canadians with the heterogeneity of Muslims. As the qualitative findings demonstrated, many exercise agency by continuing to engage with relevant other social actors in order to diminish stereotyping. Albanian participants in particular have opted to emphasize ethnic over religious identities. However, it appears as if many others—unable to get their message across and resist the influence of external categorization—have opted for the route of complete disidentification.

Is emphasizing irreligiosity an effective strategy of destigmatization in the Canadian context? On the one hand, as noted previously, there is a trend towards irreligiosity among Canadians and Balkan immigrants in general, irrespective of the religious descent. Immigrants from Bosnia and Albania in particular appear to be following suit—albeit likely for reasons different from the general population. To recall, in the 2011 NHS, about 20%, 35%, and 25% of immigrants born in Bosnia and Albania, and Canadians in general, respectively, identified as following no religion. Religious attendance is low among both Balkan immigrants who, in 2013, identified as Muslim and Canadians in general: 42% and 46%, respectively, said they do not attend religious services at all. At the same time, the majority of Canadians still identify with a religion, and a quarter attend religious services at least once a month. It could be argued, then,

that emphasizing irreligiosity may not be an effective strategy for blurring boundaries with the "mainstream" Canadian society.

If we accept the premise that social actors draw boundaries strategically in order to attain social rewards, what is behind participants' emphasis of their indifference to religion? I argue that the participants' distancing from religion/religious identification serves more to differentiate Albanian and Bosnian Muslims from other Muslims, than to blur boundaries with "mainstream" Canadians. In fact, "other" Muslims are the leading social actors in participants' narratives. Also, while religiosity in general is associated with conservative values, public, media, and political discourses paint Muslim religiosity *in particular* as being at odds with progressive, liberal, "Canadian values" such as democracy, free speech, and gender equality. Muslim religiosity is commonly associated with conservatism, illiberal (non-"Canadian") values, and, most significantly, with terrorism. In fact, Islam is often represented as the "cause" of the illiberal values that Muslims at large supposedly adhere to. The fact that terrorist attacks are justified by the perpetrators as being committed in the name of religion bolsters the stereotypes of Muslims and Islam being inherently violent and antithetical to the "Western way of life."

It is not surprising, then, that participants chose to emphasize their irreligiosity in order to cope with, or counter, anti-Muslim sentiments and incidences. Being a person of Muslim-descent who is indifferent to Islam still ranks higher than being a practising Muslim, even in a society that is fragmented regarding religion in general. The claims of religious indifference serve primarily to draw firm boundaries in relation to other Muslims, Middle Eastern in particular, in order to at least signal to "mainstream" Canadians that "we may not be like you, but we are not like them either." By disidentifying from the Muslim identification or the Muslim religion itself,

the participants thus seek to also disassociate themselves from the illiberal and “anti-Canadian” values that it supposedly embodies.

Religion, “Race,” Gender and the Option to Have Options

The question is, What enables the option of disidentification? As Mary Waters (1990) notes, not everyone is in the position to choose an identity. Being able to opt in and out is underpinned by institutional, social, and ideological contexts and the related social privileges. The answer lies to a large degree in the cultural repertoire that participants were the most reticent to discuss: the numerical and cultural hegemony of “whiteness.” It might appear as a foregone conclusion that “race” very much continues to be an important social force in Canadian society, and that Islamophobia *is* in part a phenomenon of racism. While participants have encountered Islamophobia, the majority of episodes have occurred only when participants would *decide* to “come out” as Muslims. While most said they do not exercise the option of concealing their identity, it is there. Some participants also choose not to identify as Muslim, privately or in public, or know people who do not publicly disclose their religious origins. Others acknowledged that even though they do not exercise this option, they are aware that they *do* have a choice not to identify as Muslim, simply because they are not externally readable as such.

The experience of being “white” is not the same for all “white” people. “Whiteness,” as noted earlier, is a layered, gradated category that interacts and intersects with other identity markers, such as gender, class, ethnic origin, immigration status, and sexual orientation. Being an Eastern European Muslim-origin immigrant in Canada certainly “feels” and is perceived as different from being a fifth generation Canadian of Western-European descent—even though both are officially “white.” Despite the heterogeneity of profiles and identities within the “white” category, white(looking) Canadians do, at the very least, claim the “superficial” benefits of

“looking like everyone else,” as one participant put it. Several participants noted that their grown children are “Canadians without accents” who do not disclose their religious descent. Having the option to not disclose a stigmatizing identity is an indicator of social privilege. Following Goffman (1959), participants’ whiteness(ish) operates as an indicator of social status, including religious origins and, in turn, political and moral values. “Previous experience,” and “untested stereotypes” (Goffman, 1959, p. 1) work in favour of Balkan Muslims, as “Canadians” in general do not expect that a white-presenting individual could possibly be Muslim. The general unfamiliarity with the heterogeneity of Muslims, and the Balkans in general—including the region’s religious composition—works with “whiteness” to make way for the option to not identify.

While an argument can be made that racialized Muslims could also choose not to publicly identify as Muslims, external categorizations that follow religious stereotypes are more likely to apply to people of colour. In the context of being Muslim in Canada, and the West in general, “appearance” is the often the first clue to one’s (non)Muslimness. It is a point worth repeating that “appearance” alone can expose a “brown,” “Muslim-looking” individual (even if they are not of Muslim descent at all) to stigmatization (via anti-Muslim remarks and even physical assault) and discrimination (e.g. racial profiling, “flying while brown”), and shield non-“brown,” non-“Muslim looking,” “white” Muslims from stigmatization and discrimination. As Ajrouch & Kusow (2007, p. 83) note, “To be white means not having to refer to one’s race; it is a privileged status that does not require contemplation or reflection” (and many of my participant admitted to never having thought about the implications of their racial position for their lives in Canada). The effectiveness of the “choice” to (dis)identify in this context, then, is largely determined by racial position. Minimizing the role of race, being uncertain, or admitting never to have to think

about it is another aspect of white privilege. Research shows that racial difference is a quotidian presence in the lives of visible minorities, one that is imposed on racialized Muslims and people of colour in general, regardless of whether they like to reflect on it, or not.

In this study, “whiteness” combined with gender and religious boundaries in an interesting way. Female and male participants, Albanians in particular, manifested this differently. The female participants tended to interpret other people’s surprise as the result of the participants not being covered. When asked if skin colour had a role to play in the surprised reactions, they reluctantly acknowledged that as an additional reason. However, by not making the argument that the Middle Eastern Muslim women who cover their heads are also white, they tacitly excluded them from the white category. The Albanian men in particular drew this boundary—by explaining the surprise of others upon learning they were white, and by, simultaneously, defining themselves primarily in opposition to Middle Eastern Muslims. The male participants, however, were more likely to draw racial boundaries because the gendered religious boundary was not available to them.

Canada’s social context has made it more acceptable to use gendered religious than racial boundaries in relation to Muslims. As noted earlier, there has been no shortage of public, political, and media debate over whether Muslim women’s religious garments, the niqab in particular, fit in Canadian society. Unlike “race talk,” “niqab talk” is very much socially acceptable. Disclosing one’s, typically unfavourable, position towards the practice serves to announce one’s own (eligibility for) Canadian identity and the associated values. This is why the female participants had no hesitation resorting to this gendered religious boundary. Distinguishing themselves and, indeed, being opposed to the practice of head or face covering are ways of blurring boundaries with mainstream Canadian society. In contrast, popular

narratives present racism as contrary to the Canadian way of being (embodied in multiculturalism), and indeed as what distinguishes Canadian from American society. For many (white) people, however, to not be racist implies not acknowledging race, claiming “colour-blindness” instead. This is likely part of the reason why the female participants preferred gendered religious to racial boundaries, and why the male participants (all Albanians) expressed hesitation and discomfort resorting to them.

Not All Muslims

This study certainly demonstrates that the Muslim population in Canada is diverse and that, unlike what popular representations would have us believe, *not all Muslims* are the same. Most of the participants took great pains to make this point. The question is, Does the strategy of showcasing Muslim diversity by emphasizing that *not all Muslims* are deeply attached to their religion serve to counter, or feed stereotypes of Muslims and Islam?

There is no straightforward answer. On the one hand, even though they have the option to conceal their religious origins, the majority of the participants refuse to do so, many precisely in order to disrupt stereotypes and be Muslims on their own terms. Also, even though they distance themselves from religious identification and religion by emphasizing personal and group irreligiosity, most also question the religious justifications of terrorist attacks. In so doing, they dissent from the narratives of both perpetrators and mainstream public and the media, and align themselves with Muslim-rights and left-leaning activists and academics.

On the other hand, not only did most of the participants distance themselves from Islam, but many also attached specific political and moral values to irreligiosity and religiosity alike. The strategy of participants who practise Islam to some extent, but insist on the distinctiveness of “European Islam,” as Clayer and Bougarel (2017, p. 223) and others (e.g. Elbasani, 2015) have

argued, only works to reproduce, rather than disrupt Oriental dichotomies. Disidentification from Muslim identification and the faith—as "true" in their case as it is perceived to be—coupled with the stereotyping and "othering" of Middle Eastern Muslims in particular, is reminiscent of the good (secular, Westernized) Muslim versus bad (primitive, fanatical) Muslim dichotomy (Mamdani, 2004). As such, it undermines the attempts to combat stereotypes and "humanize" all Muslims. This strategy may instead serve to (implicitly) exceptionalize Bosnian and Albanian Muslims and (inadvertently) affirm that the stereotypes of religious Muslims are correct, but that they simply do not apply to *us*. In so doing, participants inadvertently bolstered Islamophobic narratives and thus reinforced social boundaries that contribute to creating social inequalities and stratification and to reproducing racial social order.

Post-9/11 studies have shown that many Muslims have chosen solidary associations and identification with Muslims across ethnic groups as a way of coping with Islamophobia (e.g. Environics Institute, 2016; Nagra, 2017). However, recent studies suggest that most Muslims in the Balkans have not prioritized local ethno-religious identities and identifications over membership in and associations with the umma (e.g. Clayer & Bougarel, 2017; Merdjanova, 2013; Waltzer, 2015). My participants in this study, likewise, depart from the former trend. As suggested by the evidence from the 2001 and 2011 population censuses and the 2013 GSS, this is likely a result of the facts that many are not attached to the Muslim faith in the way that they perceived Muslims outside of their ethno-religious communities to be, and that, in the Canadian context, the dominant connotation of "Muslim" is of a deeply religious person who potentially cherishes illiberal, non-Canadian values.

A Case for Intuitively Strategic Boundaries

In Chapter 3, I explored the question of the "motivation" of social boundaries: Are they driven by emotions or interests? To recall, Weber (1978) essentially argued that social actors open or close relationships in order to achieve "honour, and even profit." The process of opening or closing rests on highlighting whatever differences are not only "available" (Weber, 1978, p. 385), but also "socially relevant" (Barth, 1969, p. 15) in the given social context. The selection of relevant social differences out of those available also speaks to the strategic character of the process of social closure.

This thesis makes the case for "intuitively strategic" boundaries; in this way, it aligns itself with the work of Wimmer (2013), who argues that social actors behave strategically (albeit not necessarily rationally) in order to attain social awards, but also distances itself from behaviourist and rational choice theorists The concept of intuitively strategic boundaries also allows me to incorporate Michele Lamont's (2014) and Richard's Jenkins (2014) call to recognize emotions in the process of boundary-making and destigmatization. I argue that the fact that social actors adapt their boundary-making strategies to the local cultural contexts of reception (Lamont's cultural repertoires), arguably without much forethought, speaks to the simultaneously strategic *and* intuitive character of boundary work.

Which social awards were participants mostly concerned about? At first glance, they appear to be what Weber referred to as "spiritual" awards: Weber's (1978) "status," Goffman's (1959, 1963) "prestige," and Lamont's (1992, 2016) dignity and respect. The participants' association with the proverbial "Muslims" could thus lead to a decrease, or loss, of prestige that, as immigrants especially, they have worked hard to attain.

Imported Cultural Repertoires

This study suggests that, for immigrants, employing "imported" cultural repertories that either match or conflict with those of the host society is an important mechanism of integration. As a reminder, cultural repertoires are, in the words of Hall and Lamont (2000, p. 4) "representations (identities, scripts, frames, myths, narratives, collective imaginaries)" as well as institutions that feed into behaviours and social boundaries. Cultural repertoires are often expressed in the form of discourse. As such, put simply, they represent the "utterances" that are present in various discourses (media, political, online, everyday, etc.) that are widely understood in a certain cultural context to the majority of people, and that are, conversely, used to "make sense" of the social world. These narratives, understandings and lenses loom large in the national or cultural self. Importantly, as Lamont noted (2000), cultural repertoires are not universal, but context-specific and make different sense in different locales. As argued in Chapter 3, appealing to the narrative of multiculturalism will resonate better (i.e. it will be decoded by the mainstream society/majority of social actors the way that it was intended to) in Canada than in France, the US etc., whereas arguments of secularism will resonate better in France and Quebec than in the US.

Imported repertoires are those cultural narratives, beliefs, norms etc. that immigrants bring from the home society to their host society, which they then (as a result of habituation) use to make sense of the new society. Even though they are habituated to them, a degree of strategizing goes into the process; as argued previously, social actors semi-intuitively choose the strategies that will match old and new repertoires, or try to impose the homeland over host land repertoires where the two conflict.

This study identified several imported cultural repertoires that participants employed to make sense of the Canadian social landscapes, including to cope with Islamophobia and integrate better into Canadian society. Importantly, these "imported" repertoires either matched or conflicted with the comparative Canadian cultural repertoires. These are:

1) Secular and/or ethnic understandings of "Muslim" for all participants (vs. Canadian cultural repertoire of "Muslim" as a religious category whose meanings are defined mostly by stereotypes);

2) The narrative of Albanianism for the Albanian participants, and "Brotherhood and Unity" for the Bosnian participants in particular (which was found to match the Canadian cultural repertoire of multiculturalism);

3) "Whiteness" as a dormant, but stable identity in the home society context, which becomes an active, but unstable identification in the new, host society context;

5) Precarious attachment to "Europe" and "European" identity, which matched the Canadian dominant understandings of the same concepts;

6) Ambiguous understandings of communism as both "good" and "bad," vs. communism an exclusively negatively connoted concept in Canada.

Why are imported repertoires important, and does it matter if the home and host societies' repertoires match? This study demonstrated that conflicting repertoires may motivate social actors to impose or introduce new meanings to a dominant repertoire, or, if unable to do so, to abandon previous repertoires. I already explored at length the social ramifications of the incongruence between the understandings of "Muslim" in the Balkans and in Canada, as well as the relative congruence between the understandings of "whiteness" and "Europeanness" in both

settings. I, in fact, credited the interactions of these imported and Canadian repertoires for the significant degree of disidentification of many Balkan Muslims from their religious descent.

Previous research has shown that cultural similarities (real or perceived) between the home and host society are an important “pull” factor and a contributor to successful integration (e.g. Gradstein & Schiff, 2006). This study suggests that matching repertoires may aid immigrants in adapting and integrating to their new society, as well as in dealing more successfully with challenges such as discrimination and stigmatization. The cultural repertoire of Albanianism in particular finds fertile ground in Canadian society in at least two ways: it serves as a platform to open the relationship and blur boundaries with mainstream Canadian society, and it differentiates Albanian Muslims (and Albanians in general) from other Muslims. From a Weberian perspective, Albanianism builds on communal relations not only to foster a sense of internal solidarity, but also to act on at least two common interests: to integrate into Canadian society (Albanians) and to respond to Islamophobia (specific to Albanian Muslims). Albanian participants’ social action too—while “traditional” and “automatic” in the sense that it stems from these emotional, communal relations—is also value-rational in that it is an intuitively chosen strategy that best matches what Weber refers to as “environment”—Canadian society and Canadian national myths and narratives. In other words, Canadian narratives of multiculturalism, peaceful diversity, and tolerance facilitate Albanian participants’ use of Albanianism to build their integration and destigmatization strategies. One participant openly and proudly drew a comparison between Albania’s and Canada’s diversity, thereby signalling similarities between the countries and the Albanians’ personal fitness for Canadian society. The fact that social actors adapt their boundary-making strategies to the national and cultural contexts seemingly without much forethought corroborates Wimmer’s argument that strategizing can be intuitive, and

departs from Lamont, who appears to veer towards separating emotional from rational relationships and actions. Furthermore, the perception of similarities between Albanian and Canadian repertoires correlated with Albanian participants' strong support for multiculturalism, as well as a general minimization or outright denial of the presence of racism in Canada (it was argued in Chapter 2 that the narrative of multicultural Canada and the evidence of racism in Canada exist in the public sphere as competing narratives).

In addition to blurring boundaries with "mainstream" Canadians, Albanianism also serves to delineate Albanian from other Muslims, specifically those of Middle Eastern origin. Despite the multifaith character of many Muslim-majority societies, the religiously diverse character of Albanians, coupled with the history of interfaith tolerance and an absence of intra-ethnic interfaith conflicts, creates a platform for differentiating from other Muslims. The relationship closure is based, again, on a communal narrative of Albanianism that is chosen intuitively and strategically because it is expected to resonate well within Canadian society.

Bosnian participants also made sporadic references to interethnic tolerance in former Yugoslavia, the idea that was embodied by the state-promoted and nationally accepted mantra of Brotherhood and Unity. However, since the realities of Yugoslavia's break-up and the ensuing wars ultimately betrayed this ideal, Bosnian participants could not resort to this repertoire in the same way as the Albanian participants did to Albanianism. I suggest that this disenchantment may have also played a role in Bosnian participants' relative disillusionment with Canadian multiculturalism, and, relatedly, their more critical stance towards the issue of racism in Canada.

Limitations and Recommendations

One obvious limitation of this study lies in its problematic generalizability. While the quantitative findings (rise in irreligiousity; low religiosity of Balkan Muslims) are based on a

random sample, they are also interpreted and made sense of using qualitative findings that are based on convenience and snowball sampling. Even though they appear to complement each other and point in the same direction, they are nonetheless inconclusive and tentative. More methodologically diverse studies of Balkan Muslims in Canada and elsewhere are needed to bolster or refute this study's arguments.

At first glance, the study suffers from what is often argued to be a problematic "Muslim"-related narrative: it focuses on the experiences of two small ethnic groups at the expense the almost one billion-strong and diverse Muslim societies. Non-Albanian and non-Bosnian Muslims in the study may have been represented as a monolith. This thesis, however, also differs from many studies of "Muslims in the West" that neglect ethnic differences within the diverse Muslim population. A study of, for instance, Muslims from Turkey—a country with a history of state-forced secularism, precarious European and "white" identities, and, importantly, collective identities constructed in opposition to Arabs—would provide additional insight into the destigmatization strategies of Muslims in the West. Also, how have Iranians in the West—many of whom fled Iran after the 1979 revolution imposed religion as the basis of a new political system, and who also endeavour to disassociate from Arab Muslims—responded to the 9/11 realities? Or, say, Muslims from Lebanon, a country that bears many similarities to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania: Have their attitudes towards religion changed in the post-9/11 period? How have they evaluated their racial positionings in national contexts that place them in different racial categories?

This study also suffers from an overrepresentation of women in the sample. Certain gender differences have indeed been observed, particularly with regard to the drawing of racial boundaries among Albanian Muslims. And yet, given that Islamophobia is a highly gendered

phenomenon affecting Muslim men and women differently, more research is recommended that would delineate the specifics of their boundary-making strategies.

As noted in the methodology chapter, the study did not target participants based on their age. While no major differences were found in the general boundary-making mechanisms of participants, it is possible—and likely—that a study focusing on age differentials would identify additional, age-specific strategies.

Another limitation lies in the overrepresentation of highly educated individuals in the sample; however this is also a reflection of the Canadian immigration system favouring not only immigrants, but also refugees (Yu, Oullet, & Warmington, 2007) who possess high levels of formal education. All but one participant has a university degree. A university degree, however, did not necessarily translate into a high socio-economic status. I did observe that those of higher socio-economic status, especially those with successful professional careers, are more likely to confront Islamophobia than those having a more precarious status (because of unsuccessful transferal of home country's educational and professional credentials, recent university graduation etc.). A study that included not only one or two ethnic communities, but also an ethnically diverse sample of lower and middle class Muslims in Canada would shed light on the importance of class differences in the experiences of Islamophobia.

Finally, participants in the sample are immigrants regardless of their age of arrival in Canada. While I observed similarities in the *general* boundary-making strategies, a future study could differentiate between Bosnian and/or Albanian Muslim immigrants who arrived in Canada at different age periods. Also, a study of the Canadian-born children of Albanian and Bosnian Muslim immigrants would shed light not only on differences between the first and second generation, but also on those between Canadian-born children of Muslims of different ethnicities.

Several participants in the study mentioned that their adult children are “Canadians” who do “not have accents” and do not “have the need” to identify as Muslims in public. Studies of racialized Muslims who were either born in or arrived in Canada as children show that they continue to be excluded from Canadian identity and symbolic citizenship, despite their non-accented speech or Canadian birth (e.g. Nagra, 2017). A comparative study of racialized and non-racialized second-generation Muslims would provide important insights into the social importance of “race” in Canadian society and the related differences in social mobility.

Bibliography

Abu-Laban, Y., & Gabriel, C. (2002). *Selling diversity: Immigration, multiculturalism, employment equity, and globalization.* Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.

Ahmed, L. (2011). *A quiet revolution: The veil's resurgence from the Middle East to America*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ajrouch, K. (2004). Gender, race, and symbolic boundaries: Contested spaces of identity among Arab American adolescents. *Sociological Perspectives*, *47*(3), 371–391.

Ajrouch, K., & Kusow, A. (2007). Racial and religious contexts: Situational identities among Lebanese and Somali Muslim immigrants. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *30*(1), 72–94.

Allen, C. (2010). *Islamophobia.* Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate.

Ameeriar, L. (2012). The gendered suspect: Women at the Canada–U.S. border after September 11. *Journal of Asian American Studies, 15*(2), 171–195.

Angus Reid Institute. (2016). *What makes us Canadian? A study of values, beliefs, priorities and identity*. Retrieved from Angus Reid Institute: http://angusreid.org/canada-values/

Angus Reid Institute. (2017). Religious Trends: Led by Quebec, number of Canadians holding favourable views of various religions increases. Retrieved from http://angusreid.org/religious-trends-2017/

Antonius, R. (2013). A mediated relationship: Media representations of Arabs and Muslims as a political process. In J. Hennebry & B. Momani (Eds.), *Targeted transnationals: The state, the media, and Arab Canadians* (pp. 110–128). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Antonius, R., Labelle, M., & Rocher, F. (2013). Multiculturalism and discrimination in Canada and Quebec: The case of Arabs and Muslims. In J. Hennebry & B. Momani (Eds.),

Targeted transnationals: The state, the media, and Arab Canadians (pp. 89–109). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Arat-Koç, S. (2010). Contesting or affirming "Europe"? European enlargement, aspirations for "Europeanness" and new identities in the margins of Europe. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, *18*(2), 181–191.

Astana, M. (2014). *Editorial representations of stranded citizens abroad*. Unpublished manuscript, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa.

Auerbach, C., & Silverstein, L. (2003). *Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysis.* New York: New York University Press.

Bakić-Hayden, M. (1995). Nesting orientalisms: The case of former Yugoslavia. *Slavic Review*, *54*(4), 917–931.

Baldwin, A., Camero, L., & Kobayashi, A. (2011). Introduction: Where is the Great White North? Spatializing history, historicizing whiteness. In A. Baldwin, L. Camero & A. Kobayashi (Eds.), *Rethinking the Great White North: Race, nature, and the historical geographies of whiteness in Canada* (pp. 1–18). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Banac, I. (1994). Bosnian Muslims: From religious community to socialist nationhood, and postcommunist statehood, 1918-1992. In M. Pinson (Ed.), *The Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina: Their historic development from the Middle Ages to the dissolution of Yugoslavia* (pp. 129–154). Cambridge: Distributed for the Center for Middle Eastern Studies of Harvard University by Harvard University Press.

Bannerji, H. (2000). *The dark side of the nation: Essays on multiculturalism, nationalism, and gender*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference.* Bergen: Universitetsforlaget.

Barth, F. (1994). Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity. In H. Vermeulen & C. Govers (Eds.), *The anthropology of ethnicity: Beyond "Ethnic groups and boundaries"* (pp. 11–32). Amsterdam: Spinhuis.

Bauder, H. (2006). *Labor movement: How migration regulates labor markets.* Toronto: Dundurn.

Baum, B. D. (2006). *The rise and fall of the Caucasian race: A political history of racial identity.* New York: New York University Press.

Beaman, L. (2015). Freedom of and freedom from religion: Atheist involvement in legal cases. In L. Beaman & S. Tomlins (Eds.), *Atheist identities: Spaces and social contexts* (pp. 39–52). New York: Springer International Publishing.

Berg, B. L. (2007). An introduction to content analysis. In M. Eid and M. Lagacé (Eds.), *Communication research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches* (pp. 247 –283). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Berns-McGown, R. (1999). *Muslims in the diaspora: The Somali communities of London and Toronto.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Beyer, P., & Ramji, R. (2013). *Growing up Canadian: Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Bibby, R. (2017). *Resilient gods: Being pro-religious, low religious, or no religious in Canada.* Vancouver: UBC Press.

Blumi, I. (2014). Religion and politics among Albanians of Southeastern Europe. In S. Ramet (Ed.), *Religion and politics in post-socialist Central and Southeastern Europe:*

Challenges since 1989 (pp. 286–313). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Boatcă, M. (2008). Define and rule: The role of Orientalism in (re)colonizing Eastern Europe. In K. Samman & M. Al-Zo'by (Eds.), *Islam and the Orientalist world-system* (pp. 187–201). Boulder: Paradigm Publisher.

Bock-Luna, B. (2008). *The past in exile: Serbian long-distance nationalism and identity in the wake of the third Balkan war.* Berlin: Lit.

Bogue, R., & Spariosu, M. I. (1994). *The play of the self.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Bonilla-Silva, E. (2014/2017). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America.* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Borghée, M. (2012). *Voile intégrale en France: Sociologie d'un paradox.* Paris: Éditions Michalons.

Bowen, J. (2007). *Why the French don't like headscarves: Islam, the state and public space.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1979). *La distinction: Critique sociale du jugement.* Paris: Éditions de Minuit.

Boym, S. (2001). *The future of nostalgia.* New York: Basic Books.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners.* Los Angeles: SAGE.

Brettell, C. (2007). *Constructing borders/crossing boundaries: Race, ethnicity, and immigration.* Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Bringa, T. (2002). Islam and the quest for identity in post-communist Bosnia and Herzegovina. In M. Shatzmiller (Ed.), *Islam and Bosnia: Conflict resolution and foreign policy in multi-ethnic states* (pp. 24–34). Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Brodie, J. (2008). Putting gender back in: Women and social policy reform in Canada. In Y. Abu-Laban (Ed.), *Gendering the nation-state: Canadian and comparative perspectives* (pp. 165–184). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Brodkin, K. (1998). *How Jews became white folks, and what that says about race in America.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Brubaker, R. (1999). "The Manichean Myth": Rethinking the distinction between "civic" and "ethnic" nationalism. In H.-P. Kriesi, K. Armingeon, H. Siegrist & A. Wimmer (Eds.), *Nation and national identity: The European experience in perspective* (pp. 55–71). Zurich: Ruegger.

Brubaker, R. (2002). Ethnicity without groups. *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *43*(2), 163–189.

Brubaker, R. (2004). *Ethnicity without groups.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brubaker, R. (2014). Beyond ethnicity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37*(5), 804–808.

Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond "identity." *Theory and Society*, *29*, 1–47.

Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2004). Beyond identity. In R. Brubaker (Ed.), *Ethnicity without groups* (pp. 28–63). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bugajski, J. (1996). Balkan myths and Bosnian massacres. In T. Raju & R. Friman (Eds.), *The South Slav conflict: History, religion, ethnicity, and nationalism* (pp. 115–144). New York: Garland Pub.

Bullock, K., & Jaffri, G. J. (2001). Media (mis)representations: Muslim women in the Canadian nation. *Canadian Woman Studies*, *20*(2), 35–40.

Burić, F. (2010). Dwelling on the ruins of socialist Yugoslavia: Being Bosnian by remembering Tito. In M. Todorova & Z. Gille (Eds.), *Post-communist nostalgia* (pp. 227–243). New York: Berghahn Books.

Bursell, M. (2012). Name change and destigmatization among Middle Eastern immigrants in Sweden. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *35*(3), 471–487.

Byng, M. (2010). Symbolically Muslim: Media, hijab, and the West. *Critical Sociology*, *36*(1), 109–129.

Cainkar, L. (2009). *Homeland insecurity: The Arab American and Muslim American experience after 9/11.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Canada. (2017). *Bill C-6 receives royal assent*. Retrieved October 25, 2017, from https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2017/06/bill_c-6_receivesroyalassent0.html

Caouette, J., & Taylor, D. (2015). “Don’t blame me for what my ancestors did.” In D. Lund & P. Carr (Eds.), *Revisiting the Great White North? Reframing whiteness, privilege, and identity in education* (pp. 89–104). Rotterdam:: Sense Publishers.

Carr, J. (2016). *Experiences of Islamophobia: Living with racism in the neoliberal Era.* London: Routledge.

CBC. (2017). *Hijab invites racial abuse, harassment, Vancouver woman says*. Retrieved October 26, 2017, from http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/programs/onthecoast/hijab-invites-racial-abuse-harassment-vancouver-woman-says-1.4137109

Central Intelligence Agency. (2017). *The world factbook, Kosovo*. Retrieved May 20, 2017, from https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html

Charmaz, K. (2001). Grounded theory. In R. Emerson (Ed.), *Contemporary field research: Perspectives and formulations* (pp. 335-352). Prospect Heights, Ill: Waveland press.

Chen, M. H. (2010). Alienated: A reworking of the racialization thesis after September 11. *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy, and the Law*, *18*(3), 411–437.

Chow, K. (2017). For some Americans Of MENA descent, checking a census box is complicated. Retrieved from https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/03/11/519548276/for-some-arab americans-checking-a-census-box-is-complicated

Cigar, N. (2003). The nationalist Serbian intellectuals and Islam: Defining and eliminating a Muslim community. In E. Qureshi & M. A. Sells (Eds.), *The new crusades: Constructing the Muslim enemy* (pp. 314–351). New York: Columbia University Press.

Cioroianu, A. (2002). The impossible escape: Romanians and the Balkans. In D. Bjelić & O. Savić (Eds.), *Balkan as metaphor: Between globalization and fragmentation* (pp. 209–235). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2004). *Facts and figures 2003: Immigration overview, permanent and temporary residents*. Retrieved June 30, 2017, from Citizenship and Immigration Canada: http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2010/cic/Ci1-8-2003-eng.pdf

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2011). *Canada facts and figures: Immigration overview, permanent and temporary residents*. Retrieved June 30, 2017, from http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/cic/Ci1-8-2010-eng.pdf

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2014). *Canada facts and figures: Immigrant overview, permanent residents*. Retrieved September 30, 2017, from http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/cic/Ci1-8-9-2013-eng.pdf

Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2015). *Facts & figures 2015: Immigration overview, permanent residents – Annual IRCC updates*. Retrieved June 30, 2017, from http://www.cic.gc.ca/opendata-donneesouvertes/data/IRCC_FFPR_15_E.xls

Clarke, L. (2013). *Women in the niqab speak: A study of the niqab in Canada.* The Canadian Council of Muslim Women.

Clayer, N. (2003). God in the “Land of Mercedes”: The religious communities in Albania since 1990. *Hal*, 277–314.

Clayer, N., & Bougarel, X. (2017). *Europe’s Balkan Muslims: A new history.* London: C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd.

Cohen, A. P. (1985). *The symbolic construction of community.* London: Ellis Harwood/Tavistock.

Colic-Peisker, V. (2005). “At least you’re the right colour”: Identity and social inclusion of Bosnian refugees in Australia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *31*(4), 615–638.

Colic-Peisker, V., & Walker, I. (2003). Human capital, acculturation and social identity: Bosnian refugees in Australia. 13(5), 337–360. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *13*(5), 337–360.

Creswell, J., & Plano Clark, V. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research.* Los Angeles: SAGE.

Cui, D. (2015). Multiculturalism as an integrational policy: Lessons from second generation racialized minorities. In S. Guo & L. Wong (Eds.), *Revisiting multiculturalism in Canada: Theories, policies and debates* (pp. 207–220). Rotterdam: Sense Pub.

Ditchev, I. (2002). The eros of identity. In D. Bjelić & O. Savić (Eds.), *Balkan as metaphor: Between globalization and fragmentation* (pp. 235–250). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and danger.* London: Routledge.

Driedger, L., & Halli, S. (2000). The race challenge. In L. Driedger & S. Halli (Eds.), *Race and racism: Canada's challenge* (pp. 1–209). Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Dua, E. (1999). Le passage de sujets à étrangers: les immigrants indiens et la racialization de la citoyenneté canadienne. *Sociologie et sociétés*, *31*(2), 145-162.

Eid, M. & Lagacé, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Communication research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Elbasani, A. (2015). Introduction: Nation, state and faith in the post-communist era. In E. Arolda (Ed.), *The revival of Islam in the Balkans: From identity to religiosity* (pp. 1–19). New York: Palgrave Macmillian.

Endresen, C. (2012). *Is the Albanian's religion really "Albanianism"? Religion and nation according to Muslim and Christian leaders in Albania.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.

Environics Institute. (2015). *Canadian public opinion about immigration and multiculturalism.* Retrieved from Environics Institute: http://www.environicsinstitute.org/uploads/institute-projects/environics%20institute%20-%20focus%20canada%20spring%202015%20survey%20on%20immigration-multiculturalism%20-%20final%20report%20-%20june%2030-2015.pdf

Environics Institute. (2016). *Survey of Muslims in Canada 2016*. Retrieved October 15, 2017, from http://www.environicsinstitute.org/uploads/institute-projects/survey%20of%20muslims%20in%20canada%202016%20-%20final%20report.pdf

Eriksen, T. H. (2010). *Ethnicity and nationalism: Anthropological perspectives.* London: Pluto Press.

Erjavec, K., & Volčič, Z. (2008). "We defend Western civilization": Serbian representations of a cartoon conflict. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, *19*(3), 305–321.

Essed, P. (1991). *Understanding everyday racism: An interdisciplinary theory*. Newbury Park: SAGE.

Esser, H. (2002). *Soziologie: Spezielle Grundlagen, Band 6: Sinn und Kultur.* Frankfurt: Campus.

Esterberg, K. (2002). *Qualitative methods in social research.* Boston: McGraw-Hill Press.

Fenton, S. (2010). *Ethnicity.* Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity.

Fernandez, S. (2009). The crusade over the bodies of women. *Patterns of Prejudice*, *43*(3/4), 269–286.

Flatt, J. (2012). The security certificate exception: A media analysis of human rights and security discourses in Canada's *Globe and Mail* and *National Post*. In J. Zine (Ed.), *Islam in the hinterlands: Exploring Muslim cultural politics in Canada* (pp. 239–271). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Fleras, A. (2004). Racializing culture/culturalizing race. In C. Nelson & C. Nelson (Eds.), *Racism, Eh? A critical inter-disciplinary anthology of race and racism in Canada* (pp. 429–443). Concord, ON: Captus Press.

Fleras, A. (2014). *Racisms in multicultural Canada: Paradoxes, politics, and resistance.* Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Fleras, A., & Elliott, J. (2002). *Engaging diversity: Multiculturalism in Canada.* Toronto: Nelson.

Fleras, A., & Kunz, J. L. (2001). *Media and minorities: Representing diversity in a multicultural Canada.* Toronto: Thompson Educational Pub.

Fox, J., Moroşanu, L., & Szilassy, E. (2012). The racialization of the new European migration to the UK. *Sociology*, *46*(4), 680–695.

Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Franks, M. (2000). Crossing the borders of whiteness? White Muslim women who wear the hijab in Britain today. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *23*(5), 917–929.

Freedman, J. (2006). The headscarf debate: Muslim women in Europe and the "War on terror." In K. Hunt & K. Rygiel (Eds.), *(En)gendering the war on terror: War stories and camouflaged politics* (pp. 169–190). Aldershot: Ashgate.

Friedman, F. (1996). *The Bosnian Muslims: Denial of a nation.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Funk, J. (2015). Public expressions of Bosnian Muslim religiosity and lived faith: The cases of Friday prayer and hijab. In A. Elbasani (Ed.), *The revival of Islam in the Balkans: From identity to religiosity* (pp. 204–221). New York: Palgrave Macmillian.

Gagnon, M. K., & Jiwani, Y. (2012). Amplifying threat, reasonable accommodations and Quebec's Bouchard-Taylor commission hearings 2007. In S. Kamboureli & R. Zacharias (Eds.), *Shifting the ground of Canadian literary studies* (pp. 129–150). Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Galabuzi, G.-E. (2006). *Canada's economic apartheid: The social exclusion of racialized groups in the new century.* Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Gieryn, T. F. (1983). Boundary-work and the demarcation of science from non-science: Strains and interests in professional ideologies of scientists. *American Sociological Review*, *48* (6), 781–795.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Goldsworthy, V. (1998/2012). *Inventing Ruritania: The imperialism of the imagination.* London: Hurst & Company.

Gouldner, A. W. (1971). *The coming crisis of Western sociology.* London: Heinemann.

Gradstein, Mark, and Maurice Schiff. "The political economy of social exclusion, with implications for immigration policy." *Journal of Population Economics* 19, no. 2 (2006): 327-344.

Grbich, C. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis: An introduction.* London: SAGE.

Griffith, A. (2013). *Policy arrogance or innocent bias? Resetting citizenship and multiculturalism.* Ottawa: Anar Press.

Grodsky, B. (2016). *The democratization disconnect: How recent democratic revolutions threaten the future of democracy.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gualtieri, S. (2009). *Between Arab and White: Race and ethnicity in the early Syrian American diaspora.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Guglielmo, J., & Salerno, S. (2003). *Are Italians white? How race is made in America.* New York: Routledge.

Guillaumin, C. (1995). *Racism, sexism, power, and ideology.* London: Routledge.

Guimond, S. (2006). *Social comparison and social psychology: Understanding cognition, intergroup relations and culture.* Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gupta, M. D. (2004). A view of 9/11 justice from below. *Peace Review*, *16*(2), 141–149.

Hall, P., & Lamont, M. (2009). *Successful societies: How institutions and culture affect health.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hamdon, E. L. (2010). *Islamophobia and the question of Muslim identity: The politics of difference and solidarity.* Black Point, NS: Fernwood Pub.

Hammond, A. (2005). “The danger zone of Europe”: Balkanism between the Cold War and 9/11. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *8*(2), 135–154.

Handelman, D. (1977). The organization of ethnicity. *Ethnic groups*, *1*, 187–200.

Hansen, R. (2014). Assimilation by stealth: Why Canada’s multicultural policy is really a repackaged integration policy. In J. Jedwab (Ed.), *The multiculturalism question: Debating identity in 21st-century Canada* (pp. 73–88). Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Harb, Ali. (2018). US Census fails to add MENA category: Arabs to remain “white” in count. Retrieved from https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-census-continue-count-arabs white-1206288795

Harris, K. (2017). *Hate crimes against Muslims in Canada up 60%, StatsCan reports*. Retrieved from CBC News: http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/hate-crimes-muslims-statscan-1.4158042

Haug, H. K. (2012). *Creating a socialist Yugoslavia: Tito, communist leadership and the national question.* London: I. B. Tauris.

Helly, D. (2004). Are Muslims discriminated against in Canada since September 2001? *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal*, *36*(1), 24–47.

Helms, E. (2008). East and West kiss: Gender, orientalism, and Balkanism in Muslim majority Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Slavic Review*, *67*(1), 88–119.

Hennink, M., Bailey, A., & Hutter, I. (2011). *Qualitative research methods.* London: SAGE.

Henry, F. (1995). *The colour of democracy: Racism in Canadian society.* Toronto, ON: Harcourt Brace Canada.

Hockenos, P. (2003). *Homeland calling: Exile patriotism and the Balkan wars.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Hogarth, K., & Fletcher, W. (2018). *A space for race: Decoding racism, multiculturalism, and post-colonialism in the quest for belonging in Canada and beyond.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Hoodfar, H. (2003). *More than clothing, Veiling as an adaptive strategy.* In H. Hoodfar, S. McDonough & S. Alvi (Eds.), *The Muslim veil in North America: Issues and debates,* (pp. 3–40). Toronto, ON: Women's Press.

Horowitz, D. (1975). Ethnic identity. In N. Glazer & D. P. Moynihan (Eds.), *Ethnicity: Theory and experience* (pp. 111–140). Cambride, MA: Harvard University Press.

Horowitz, D. (1985). *Ethnic groups in conflict.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hussain, M. (2000). Islam, Media and Minorities in Denmark. *Current Sociology, 48*(4), 95-116.

Ignatiev, N. (1995). *How the Irish became white.* New York: Routledge.

Jacobs, G. (2006). *Charles Horton Cooley: Imagining social reality.* Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

Jacobsen, M. H., & Kristiansen, S. (2010). Labelling Goffman: The presentation and appropriation of Erving Goffman in academic life. In M. H. Jacobsen (Ed.), *The contemporary Goffman* (pp. 64–97). New York: Routledge.

Jakubowski, L. M. (1997). *Immigration and the legalization of racism.* Halifax, NS: Fernwood.

James, C. (2009). “It will happen without putting in place special measures”: Racially diversifying universities. In F. Henry & C. Tator (Eds.), *Racism in the Canadian university: Demanding social justice, inclusion, and equity* (pp. 128–159). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Janesick, V. (2010). *Oral history for the qualitative researcher: Choreographing the story.* New York: Guilford Press.

Jenkins, R. (2008a). Erving Goffman: A major theorist of power? *Journal of Power*, *1*(2), 157–168.

Jenkins, R. (2008b). *Rethinking ethnicity.* Los Angeles: SAGE.

Jenkins, R. (2008c). *Social identity.* London; New York: Routledge.

Jenkins, R. (2010). Beyond social structure. In P. Martin & A. Dennis (Eds.), *Human agents and social structures* (pp. 133–151). Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Jenkins, R. (2014). Time to move beyond boundary making? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37*(5), 809–813.

Jezernik, B. (2010). Imagining “the Turk.” In B. Jezernik (Ed.), *Imagining “the Turk”* (pp. 1–16). Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Pub.

Jiwani, Y. (2006). *Discourses of denial: Mediations of race, gender, and violence.* Vancouver: UBC Press.

Johnson, J., & Rowlands, T. (2012). The interpersonal dynamics of in-depth interviewing. In J. Gubrium (Ed.), *The Sage handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (pp. 99–115). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Juteau, D. (1996). Theorising ethnicity and ethnic communalisations at the margins: From Quebec to the world system. *Nations and Nationalism*, *2*(1), 45–66.

Juteau, D. (1999/2015). *L'ethnicité et ses frontières.* Montréal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal.

Juteau, D. (2000). Patterns of social differentiation in Canada: Understanding their dynamics and bridging the gaps. *Canadian Public Policy*, *26*, 95–107.

Karim, K. H. (1996). *Constructions of the Islamic peril in English-language Canadian print media: Discourse on power and violence.* Montreal: UMI.

Karim, K. H. (2002). Crescent dawn in the great white north: Muslim participation in the Canadian public sphere. In Y. Haddad (Ed.), *Muslims in the West: From sojourners to citizens* (pp. 262–277). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kazemipur, A. (2014). *The Muslim question in Canada: A story of segmented integration.* Vancouver: UBC Press.

Khosravi, S. (2012). White masks/Muslim names: Immigrants and name-changing in Sweden. *Race & Class*, *53*(3), 65–80.

King, R., & Mai, N. (2008). *Out of Albania: From crisis migration to social inclusion in Italy.* New York: Berghahn Books.

King, R., Mai, N., & Schwandner-Sievers, S. (2005). *The new Albanian migration.* Brighton: Sussex Academic Press.

Knowles, V. (2007). *Strangers at our gates: Canadian immigration and immigration policy, 1540-2006.* Toronto, ON: Dundurn.

Kowalski, J. (2013). “Framing” the Toronto 18: Government experts, corporate media, and the Orientalizing of the Other. In B. Momani & J. Hennebry (Eds.), *Targeted transnationals: The state, the media, and Arab Canadians* (pp. 129–156). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Kroneberg, C. (2005). Die Definition der Situation und die variable Rationalität der Akteure: Ein allgemeines Modell des Handelns. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, *34*(5), 344–363.

Kroneberg, C. (2014). Frames, scripts, and variable rationality: An integrative theory of action. *Analytical Sociology*, 95–193.

Lamont, M. (1992). *Money, morals, and manners: The culture of the French and American upper-middle class.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lamont, M. (2000). *The dignity of working men: Morality and the boundaries of race, class, and immigration.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Lamont, M. (2009). Responses to racism, health, and social inclusion as a dimension of successful societies. In P. Hall & M. Lamont (Eds.), *Successful societies: How institutions and culture affect health* (pp. 151–168). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lamont, M. (2014). Reflections inspired by ethnic boundary making: Institutions, power, networks by Andreas Wimmer. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37*(5), 814–819. Lamont, M., & Bail, C. (2006). Sur les frontières de la reconnaissance. Les catégories internes et externes de l’identité collective. *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationale*, *21*(2), 61–90.

Lamont, M., & Molnár, V. (2002). The study of boundaries in the social sciences. *Annual review of sociology*, *28*, 167–195.

Lamont, M., & Thévenot, L. (2000). *Rethinking comparative cultural sociology: Repertoires of evaluation in France and the United States.* Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lamont, M., Silva, G. M., Welburn, J., Guetzkow, J., Mizrachi, N., Herzog, H., et al. (2016). *Getting respect: Responding to stigma and discrimination in the United States, Brazil, and Israel.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Leandrit, M. (2017). Kosovar identity: Challenging Albanian national identity. *Australia and New Zealand Journal of European Studies*, *9*(1), 16–25.

Leber, B. (2017). Police-reported hate crime in Canada. Retrieved from Statistics Canada: https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/14832-eng.htm

Levine, R. F. (2006). *Social class and stratification: Classic statements and theoretical debates.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Ley, D. (2007). *Multiculturalism: A Canadian defence.* Burnaby, BC: Vancouver Centre of Excellence.

Li, P. (2003). *Destination Canada: Immigration debates and issues.* Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Li, Y.-T. (2016). “Playing” at the ethnic boundary: Strategic boundary making/unmaking among ethnic Chinese groups in Australia. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *39*(4), 671–689.

Lindlof, T., & Taylor, B. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Longinović, T. (2002). Vampires like us: Gothic imaginary and "the Serbs." In D. Bjelić & O. Savić (Eds.), *Balkan as metaphor: Between globalization and fragmentation* (pp. 39–60). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Lucken, K. R. (2010). Identity matters: Bosnian identity maintenance in a post-migration setting (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Boston University, Boston, MA.

MacDonald, D. B. (2002). *Balkan holocausts? Serbian and Croatian victim-centered propaganda and the war in Yugoslavia.* Manchester: Mancherster University Press.

Magnusson, E., & Marecek, J. (2015). *Doing interview-based qualitative research: A learner's guide.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mahtani, M. (2002). Interrogating the hyphen-nation: Canadian multicultural policy and "mixed race" identities. *Social Identities*, *8*(1), 67–90.

Mai, N. (2005). The Albanian diaspora-in-the-making: Media, migration and social exclusion. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *31*(3), 543–561.

Malešević, S. (2004). *The sociology of ethnicity.* London: SAGE.

Mamdani, M. (2004). *Good Muslim, bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the roots of terror.* New York: Three Leaves Press.

Marvasti, A., & McKinney, K. (2004). *Middle-Eastern lives in America.* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Mascarenhas, M. (2012). *Where the waters divide: Neoliberalism, white privilege, and environmental racism in Canada.* Lanham: Lexington Books.

Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

McCorkel, J., & Myers, K. (2003). What difference does difference make? Position and privilege in the field. *Qualitative Sociology*, *26*(2), 199–231.

McDonough, S., & Hoodfar, H. (2005). Muslims in Canada: From ethnic groups to religious community. In P. Bramadat & D. Seljak (Eds.), *Religion and ethnicity in Canada* (pp. 133–153). Toronto, ON: Pearson Longman.

McIntosh, P. (1989). White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack. *Peace and Freedom Magazine*, pp. 10–12.

Meer, N. (2010). *Citizenship, identity and the politics of multiculturalism: The rise of Muslim consciousness.* Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Meer, N. (2012). Racialization and religion: Race, culture and difference in the study of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *36*(3), 385–398.

Merdjanova, I. (2013). *Rediscovering the Umma: Muslims in the Balkans between nationalism and transnationalism.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Merriam Webster. (2017). Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/identity?utm_campaign=sd&utm_medium=serp&utm_source=jsonld

Mesarič, A. (2013). Wearing hijab in Sarajevo: Dress practices and the Islamic revival in post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Anthropological journal of European cultures*, *22*(2), 12–23.

Mesarič, A. (2015). Muslim women’s dress practices in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Localizing Islam through everyday lived practice. In A. Elbasani, *The revival of Islam in the Balkans: from identity to religiosity* (pp. 103–121). New York: Palgrave Macmillian.

Miller, J., & Glassner, B. (2004). The “inside” and the “outside”: Finding realities in interviews. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method, practice* (pp. 125–140). London: SAGE.

Miriam, B., & Lamonica, A. (2015). Sampling designs and issues in qualitative criminology. In H. Copes & M. Mitchell (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of qualitative criminology* (pp. 125–143). New York: Routledge.

Miskovic, M. (2003). The construction of racial and ethnic identity of Balkan immigrants to the United States: A narrative analysis (*Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation*). Loyola University Chicago: Chicago.

Miskovic, M. (2007). The construction of ethnic identity of Balkan Muslim immigrants: A narrativization of personal experiences. *The Qualitative Report*, *12*(3), 514–546.

Mizrachi, N., & Herzog, H. (2012). Participatory destigmatization strategies among Palestinian citizens, Ethiopian Jews and Mizrahi Jews in Israel. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *35*(3), 418–435.

Moghissi, H. (2009). Diaspora by design: Muslims in Canada and beyond. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Moroşanu, L., & Fox, J. (2013). “No smoke without fire”: Strategies of coping with stigmatised migrant identities. *Ethnicities*, *12*(3), 438–56.

Moynagh, M. (2010). Eyeing the North Star? Figuring Canada in postslavery fiction and drama. In W. Siemerling & S. Casteel (Eds.), *Canada & its Americas: Transnational navigations*, 135–147. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

Mullings, D., Morgan, A., & Quelleng, H. (2016). Canada the Great White North where anti-Black racism thrives: Kicking down the doors and exposing the realities. *Phylon (1960-)*, *53*(1), 20–41.

Nagra, B. (2017). *Securitized citizens: Canadian Muslims' experience of race relations and identity formation post-9/11.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Nease, K. (2016). OC Transpo bus driver 'super courageous' for defending woman in niqab from taunts. Retrieved October 25, 2017, from http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/oc-transpo-muslim-bus-driver-niqab-1.3608621

Neuman, W. L. (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Nicholls, T. (2015). The Great White North: Failing Muslim Canadians, failing us all. In B. Bergo & T. Nicholls (Eds.), *I don't see color: Personal and critical perspectives on white privilege* (pp. 200–209). University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Nikolić, L. (2003). Ethnic prejudices and discrimination: The case of Kosovo. In F. Bieber & Z. Daskalovski (Eds.), *Understanding the War in Kosovo* (pp. 51–73). London: Frank Cass.

Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S., & and Turner, J. C. (1994). *Stereotyping and social reality.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Okamoto, D. G. (2014). Redefining race: Asian American panethnicity and shifting ethnic boundaries. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Öktem, K. (2011). Between emigration, de-Islamization and the nation-state: Muslim communities in the Balkans today. *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, *11*(2), 155–171.

Olson, K. (2011). *Essentials of qualitative interviewing.* Walnut Creek, Calif: Left Coast Press.

open.data.al. (2011). *Religious affiliation in Albania,1923-2011*. Retrieved May 20, 2017, from http://open.data.al/en/lajme/lajm/id/670/Religious-affiliation-in-Albania-1923-2011

Parkin, F. (2002). *Max Weber.* London; New York: Routledge.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice.* Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Perica, V. (2002). *Balkan idols: Religion and nationalism in Yugoslav states*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Perigoe, R., & Eid, M. (2014). *Mission invisible.* Vancouver: UBC Press.

Perkins, C. (1997). Any more colorful we'd have to censor it. In S. de Castell & M. Bryson (Eds.), *Radical in(ter)ventions: identity politics and difference/s in educational praxis* (pp. 247–269). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Petrović, T. (2008). Serbs, Albanians, and those in-between: The gradation of otherness and identity management in the nation-building process. *Two Homelands, 27*, 67–80.

Popesko Schmadl, M. (2013). *"Don't Eastern Europe me!" Challenging stereotypes about the geographic position of the Republic of Serbia*. Retrieved from http://www.ebritic.com/?p=292751

Popis 2013. (2017). *Etnička/nacionalna pripadnost, vjeroispovijest, maternji jezik*. Retrieved from http://www.popis.gov.ba/popis2013/doc/Knjiga2/BOS/K2_T5_B.xlsx

Popkostadinova, N. (2011). *Interactive map: Roma populations in Roma decade countries*. Retrieved from http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/interactive-map-roma-populations-in-roma-decade-countries

Poulton, H., & Taji-Farouki, S. (1997). *Muslim identity and the Balkan state.* London: Hurst & Company in association with the Islamic Council.

Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1993). The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *530*, 74 96.

Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Previsic, I. (2017). Neoliberalism and gender equality: Canadian newspapers' representations of the ban of face coverings at citizenship ceremonies. *The Review of European and Russian Affairs*, *11*(7), 1–24.

Provost, R. (2015). *Mapping the legal boundaries of belonging: Religion and multiculturalism from Israel to Canada.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Ramet, S. (2006). *The three Yugoslavias: State-building and legitimation, 1918-2005.* Woodrow Wilson Center Press: Indiana University Press.

Ramet, S. (2014). Religious organizations in post-communist Central and Southeastern Europe: An introduction. In S. Ramet (Ed.), *Religion and politics in post-socialist Central and Southeastern Europe: Challenges since 1989* (pp. 1–24). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Razack, S. (2002). *Race, space, and the law: Unmapping a white settler society.* Toronto, ON: Between the Lines.

Razack, S. (2008). *Casting out: The eviction of Muslims from Western law and politics.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Razsa, M., & Lindstrom, N. (2004). Balkan is beautiful: Balkanism in the political discourse of Tudjman's Croatia. *East European Politics and Societies, 62*(1), 110–141.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Elam, G., Tennant, R., & Rahim, N. (2014). Designing and selecting samples. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers* (pp. 111–146). London: SAGE.

Roach, K. (2009). Canadian national security policy and Canadian Muslim communities. In A. Sinno (Ed.), *Muslims in Western politics* (pp. 219–244). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Rogers, M. F. (1979). Goffman on power, hierarchy and status. In J. Ditton (Ed.), *The view from Goffman* (pp. 100–133). London: Macmillan.

Ruane, J., & Todd, J. (2004). The roots of intense ethnic conflict may not in fact be ethnic: Categories, communities and path dependence. *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *45*(2), 209–232.

Rubin, H., & Rubin, I. (2004). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Ruby, T. (2006). Listening to the voices of hijab. *Women's Studies International Forum,* (291), 54–66.

Ryan, Phil. (2010). Multicultiphobia. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Saeed, A. (2007). Media, Racism and Islamophobia: The Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media. *Sociology Compass, 1*(2), 443-462.

Safran, W. (2008). Names, Labels, and Identities: Sociopolitical Contexts and the Question of Ethnic Categorization. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power, 15*, 437–461.

Said, E. (1979). *Orientalism.* New York: Vintage Books.

Satzewich, V., & Liodakis, N. (2010). *"Race" & ethnicity in Canada: A critical introduction.* Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Schwandner-Sievers, S. (2008). Albanians, Albanianism and the strategic subversion of stereotypes. *Anthropological notebooks, 15* (1), 47-64 .

Schwandner-Sievers, S. (2010). Invisible-Inaudible: Albanian Memories of Socialism. In M. Todorova, & Z. Gille, *Post-communist nostalgia* (pp. 96-112). New York: Berghahn Books.

Schwandner-Sievers, S., & Fischer, B. (2002). *Albanian identities: Myth and history.* London: Hurst & Co.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Seraidari, K. (2012). L' homo Balkanicus en contexte migratoire: Un modèle d'identification à défendre ou à rejeter? *Civilisations, 60* (2), 103-118.

Shachar, A. (2015). Law, religion and gender. In S. Ferrarri, *The Routledge Handbook of Law and Religion* (pp. 321-335). New York: Routledge.

Skrbiš, Z. (1999). *Long-distance nationalism: diasporas, homelands and identities.* Aldershot; Brookfield USA: Ashgat.

Stan, L., & Turcescu, L. (2007). *Religion and politics in post-communist Romania.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Statistics Canada. (2016, September 16). *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: First Nations People, Métis and Inuit*. Retrieved from Statistics Canada: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-011-x/99-011-x2011001-eng.cfm

Statistics Canada. (2014, December 22). *General Social Survey - Social Identity (SI)*. Retrieved June 14, 2017, from Statistics Canada: http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=5024

Statistics Canada. (2016, September 15). *Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada*. Retrieved from Statistics Canada: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.cfm

Statistics Canada. (2011). *National Household Survey: Individuals file. [Private use microdata]*. Ottawa,ON: Statistics Canada.

Statistics Canada. (2015). *NHS Profile, Ontario, 2011* . Retrieved 5 September 2017, from http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Ontario&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=35

Statistics Canada. (2016b). *Two-thirds of the population declare Christian as their religion* . Retrieved January 22, 2018, from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-003-x/2014001/section03/33-eng.htm

Statistics Canada. (2015, December 31). *Visible Minority and Population Group Reference Guide, National Household Survey, 2011*. Retrieved from Statistics Canada: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/ref/guides/99-010-x/99-010-x2011009-eng.cfm

Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions and marginality: Manifestations, dynamic, and impact.* Hoboken: Wiley.

Tajfel, H. (1972). La categorisation sociale. In S. Moscovici, *Introduction a la psychologie sociale (Volume I).* Paris: Larousse.

Taras, R. (2012). "Islamophobia never stands still": Race, religion, and culture. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 36* (3), 417-433.

Teelucksingh, C. (2006). Towards claiming space: Theorizing racialized spaces in Canadian cities. In C. Teelucksingh, *Claiming space: Racialization in Canadian cities* (pp. 1-18). Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press.

Thiessen, J., & Dawson, L. (2012). Is there a "Renaissance" of Religion in Canada? A Critical look at Bibby and beyond . In L. Beaman, *Religion and Canadian Society, 2nd Edition: Contexts, Identities, and Strategies* (pp. 91-114). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Thobani, S. (2007). *Exalted subjects: Studies in the making of race and nation in Canada.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Thompson, M. (1994). *Forging war: The media in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Hercegovina.* London: Article 19.

Todorova, M. (1997/2009). *Imagining the Balkans.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Todorova, M. S. (2006). Race travels: Whiteness and modernity across national borders. (Unpublished PhD). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Todorova, M., & Gille, Z. (2010). *Post-communist nostalgia.* (M. Todorova, & Z. Gille, Eds.) New York: Berghahn Books.

Tomlins, S., & Beaman, L. (2015). Introduction. In L. Beaman, & S. Tomlins, *Atheist identities: Spaces and social contexts* (pp. 1-18). New York: Springer International Publishing.

Triandafyllidou, A. (2010). *Muslims in 21st century Europe: structural and cultural perspectives* . New York: Routledge.

Van Riemsdijk, M. (2010). Variegated privileges of whiteness: lived experiences of Polish nurses in Norway. *Social & Cultural Geography*, *11* (2), 117-137.

Volčič, Z. (2005). The notion of “the West” in the Serbian national imaginary. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *8*, 155-175.

Vucetic, S. (2004). Identity is a Joking Matter: Intergroup Humor in Bosnia. *Spaces of Identity*, *4* (1), 7-34.

Wallman, S. (1986). Ethnicity and the boundary process in context. In J. Rex, & D. Mason, *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations* (pp. 226-245). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wallman, S. (1978). The Boundaries of "'Race": Processes of Ethnicity in England. *Man*, *13* (2), 200-217.

Waltzer, L. (2015). Negotiating Identity: How Religion Matters After All for Migrants and Refugees in Luxemburg . In C. La Barbera, *Identity and Migration in Europe: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 209-225). Springer International Publishing .

Waltzer, L. (2015). Negotiating Identity: How Religion Matters After All for Migrants and Refugees in Luxemburg. In C. La Barbera, *Identity and Migration in Europe: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (pp. 209-225). Springer International Publishing.

Waters, M. (1999). *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities* . New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Waters, M. (1990). *Ethnic options: choosing identities in America.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wimmer, A. (2014). Ethnic boundary making as strategic action: reply to my critics. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *37* (5), 834-842.

Wimmer, A. (2013). *Ethnic boundary making: institutions, power, networks.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Wimmer, A. (2008). The Making and Unmaking of Ethnic Boundaries: A Multilevel Process Theory. *American Journal of Sociology*, *113* (4), 970-1022 .

Winland, D. (2007). *We are now a nation: Croats between "home" and "homeland'.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Winter, E. (2011). *Us, them and others: Pluralism and national identities in diverse societies.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Winter, E. (2014). What can Weberian sociology tell us about multiculturalism and religion? In L. Beaman, & S. Sikka, *Multiculturalism and religious identity: Canada and India* (pp. 189-208). Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Winter, E., & Previsic, I. (2017). Citizenship Revocation in the Mainstream Press: A case of Re-ethnicization? *The Canadian Journal of Sociology,*, *42* (1), 55-82.

Wong, L., & Guo, S. (2015). Revisiting Multiculturalism in Canada: An Introduction. In L. Wong, & S. Guo, *Revisiting Multiculturalism in Canada: Theories, Policies and Debates* (pp. 1-16). Rotterdam: Sense Pub.

Yeğenoğlu, M. (1998). *Colonial fantasies: Towards a feminist reading of Orientalism.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yildiz, A. A., & Verkuyten, M. (2012). "We are not terrorists": Turkish Muslim organizations and the construction of a moral identity. *Ethnicities*, *13* (3), 359–381.

Yu, S., Oullet, E., & Warmington, A. (2007). Refugee Integration in Canada: A Survey of Empirical Evidence and Existing Services. *Refuge, 24*(2), 17-34.

Yousif, A. (2008). *Muslims in Canada: A question of identity.* Ottawa: Legas.

Zimmermann, T. (2012). *Balkan memories: media constructions of national and transnational history* . Bielefeld: Transcript.

Zolberg, A., & Woon, L. L. (1999). Why Islam is like Spanish: Cultural Incorporation in Europe and the United States. *Politics and Society*, *27* (1), 5-38.

Appendix A

Interview Guide

Ethnic/Religious Identity

1. How would you identify yourself in terms of ethnicity and religion?

2. How do you feel as a Bosnian/Albanian in Canada?

3. How do you feel as a Muslim person in Canada?

4. Is there a difference in these two “feelings”? Why?

5. Do you observe religious holidays?

6. Are others (non-Muslim friends, colleagues from work etc.) aware that you observe religious holidays?

7. What are the typical reactions you encounter?

8. What sense do you make of them?

9. How do you feel as a Muslim in a predominantly Christian society?

Being Muslim in Canada

10. How do you think Canadian society views Bosnian/Albanian Muslims?

11. How do you think Canadian society views Muslims in general?

12. How would you compare your perceived society’s view of Bosnian/Albanian Muslims to other Muslims? Similar, different, better, worse?

13. Can you describe any experiences, positive or negative, that relate to you being a Muslim in Canada?

14. Do know of any experiences of others (your family members, friends, colleagues) that relate to them being Muslims in Canada?

a) Have you ever been asked what religion you are?
b) Why do you think you were asked that question?

c) What did you say?
d) How did that make you feel?

e) Have you ever been asked if you were Muslim?
f) Why do you think you were asked that question?
g) What did you say?
h) How did that make you feel?

15. Do you think there are any differences in how Muslims are viewed in Canada and in other countries?

a) The United States
b) Western Europe

16. How do you think other Muslims who do not belong to your ethnic group view you/think about you?
17. Do you have any friends or colleagues who are Muslim but not Bosniak/Albanian?

9/11 and War on Terror

18. How do you think 9/11 and War on Terror impacted how Muslims are seen in Canada and abroad?

19. How do you think Muslims were seen before 9/11?

20. What do you think was the impact of 9/11 and War on Terror on Bosnian/Albanian Muslims?

21. How would you compare the impact of 9/11 and War on Terror on Bosnian/Albanian Muslims and other Muslims? Do you think the impact has been similar or different? Better, worse? Explain why.

22. Do you have any examples of your experiences that relate to you being Muslim in Canada and that might have been a result of 9/11 and War on Terror?

23. Do you recall any instances in which you felt that being Muslim put you in an uncomfortable position?

24. For instance, have you ever been stopped at the airport? Do you know of any other Bosnian/Albanians that this may have happened to?

25. Has anything ever happened to you at the airport or the border that you ascribed to you being Muslim?

26. Has anything ever happened to your family members, friends, colleagues at the airport or the border that you ascribed to them being Muslim?

27. Which Muslim ethnic groups, or nationalities do you think have been most affected in recent years?

28. When you hear that there has been a terrorist attack, what do you think?

29. How do you feel when you hear that a Muslim person committed a terrorist attack?

30. Conversely, do you recall any instances in which you felt that being Muslim helped you?

Muslim Men vs. Muslim Women

a) What image do you think that Canadian society has of Muslim men?

b) Do you think there are differences between the way Muslim men and Muslim women are treated?

Headscarves

31. Muslim women's face covering has been a topic of many public debates. What is your position on Muslim women covering their heads and/or faces?

32. For women: do you wear a headscarf? Why?

33. For men: do women in your family wear a headscarf?

34. Do Bosnian/Albanian Muslim women typically wear headscarves?

35. If no, do you know why?

36. If yes or some, which type?

37. What do you know about their experiences in Canada?

38. Do you think that Muslim women who wear a headscarf are treated differently by Canadian society?

39. What do you think in general of the attention that has been given to the topic of headscarves? OR

40. What sense do you make of Canadian society's debates on the question?

Media

41. In your opinion, what effect has the media had on how Muslims are perceived?

42. What about the media coverage of your own ethnic group?

Relations with Other Muslims

43. What do you think about other Muslims who do not belong to your ethnic group? Do you have opportunities to socialize with Muslims from other groups? Describe these opportunities and encounters.

44. Do you go to the mosque? Is a multi-ethnic mosque or is it dedicated to one ethnic or linguistic group only?

45. How do you think other Muslims see you?

46. In what ways do you feel you are similar to other Muslims?

47. In what ways do you feel you are different from other Muslims?

Racial Diversity

48. What sense do you make of/What do you think about Canada's racial diversity?

49. How do you feel as a white person in Canada?

50. How do you feel as a European in Canada?

51. How do you feel as a European, white Muslim in Canada?

52. To what extent do you feel that being European/white/invisible has benefitted you?

53. Can you recall any situations in which you felt that being European/white/invisible helped?

54. Can you recall any situations in which you felt that being European/white/invisible did not help (was a disadvantage)?

55. What effect do you think that being from Europe/white has had on how people see you as a Muslim? Do you think you may be seen differently (as a Muslim) because you are white?

Dominant Groups

56. How would you define “Canadians”? How is your relationship with people from so-called dominant groups, Canadian-born people originating mainly from Britain, France, Western and Northern Europe?

57. In what ways do you feel you are similar to dominant groups/”Canadians”?

58. In what ways do you feel you are different than them?

59. What influence do you think your being from Europe has had on how dominant groups/”Canadians” view you?

60. What influence do you think being “white” has had on how dominant groups/”Canadians” view you?

Other Muslims

61. What do you think about Muslims from outside your ethnic group?

62. In what ways do you feel similar to them?

63. In what ways do you think you are different from them?

64. How do you think they Muslims see you?

65. How connected do you feel to the wider Muslim community?

Friends/neigbourhood

66. Can you please describe your circle of friends in terms of their ethnicities and religion?

67. Can you please describe the neighbourhood you live in terms of ethnic, racial and religious characteristics?

68. Which ethnic groups do you feel closest to?

Identities Again

69. Out of all the identities that we have discussed (Bosnian/Albanian, European, Muslim, white, Eastern European), which one is the most important to you?